

express

A PUBLICATION OF **The Washington Post** | LIVE ALL DAY AT WWW.READEXPRESS.COM | DECEMBER 1-3, 2006 | >>**FREE**<<

Weekend



A driver scrapes ice from his car in Missouri.

The Big Freeze: First major storm pummels the Midwest | **6**

Spy Mystery: FBI is joining British in probe of poisoning | **7**

Flippin' Falcon: Vick stands between Redskins and playoff longshot | **14**

ENTERTAINMENT

Like Jazz: NBC's comedy 'The Office' thrives on improvisation. Plus, reviews of 'F---' and 'The Nativity Story.'

>> **21-32**

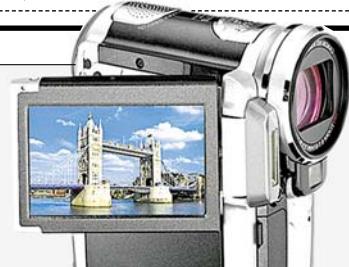


Weather >> Heavy Storms



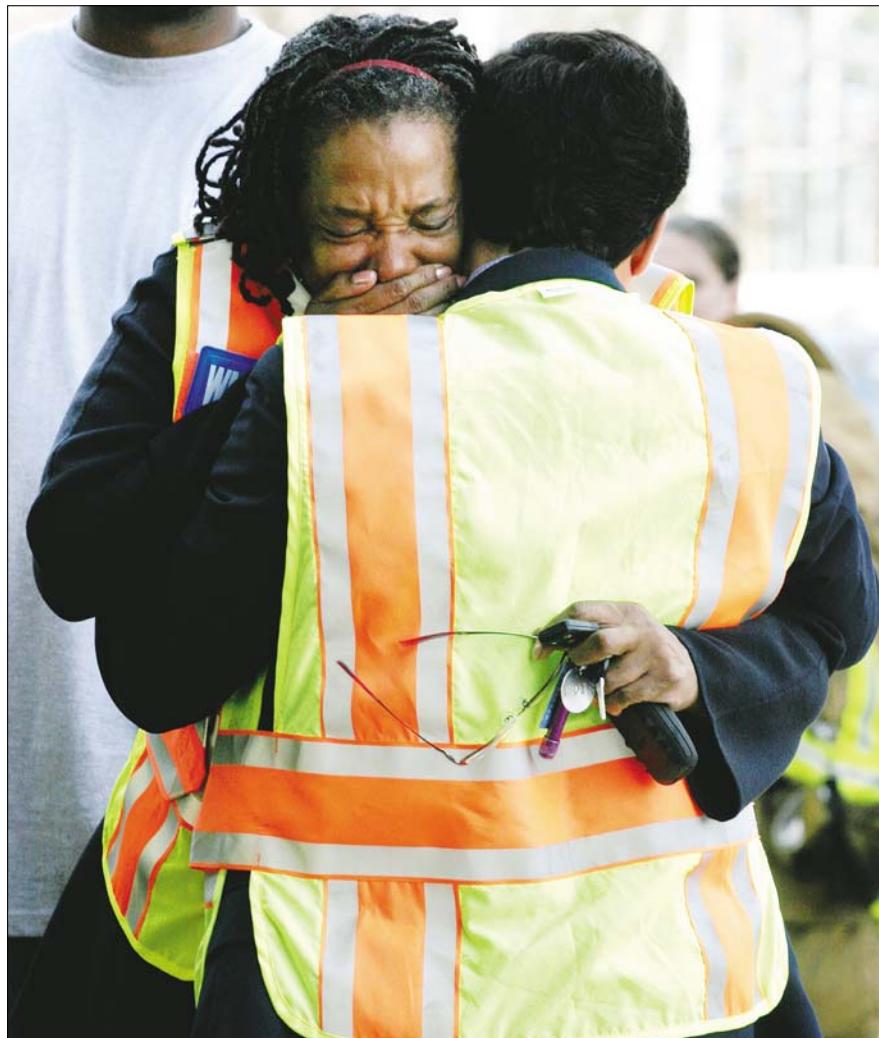
70 | 37

FULL FORECAST ON PAGE 42



GREAT GIZMOS

Cameras! Smartphones! Robots! >> **WEEKEND STYLES**



Metro Worker Killed by Train

SUPPORT: Metro workers comfort each other at the scene of Thursday's deadly accident, in which an out-of-service Yellow Line train struck two employees working on the track at Eisenhower Avenue, killing one and seriously injuring the other. ♦ **Deadly year:** Death is second in past 12 months | **Page II**



CUSTODY | Then, He Replied to the Ad A father embroiled in a custody dispute posted a phony ad on the Internet offering to give away his 5-year-old boy to make his Pensacola, Fla., wife look bad, investigators said Wednesday. The

ad, written as if it were placed by the mother, listed the boy as "free to a good home." "I've had him now for five years. I've somewhat abused him, but I cannot control myself or him," the ad read. "I have mental problems." (EXPRESS) **EyeOpeners** | **Page 2**

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THE ARMY

Hey, Insurgents — FORE!

On paper, the U.S. Army was supposed to be getting "a ball bearing assortment" for \$1,409. It was bad enough that the order form marked up the price from \$682.50. But there was something about the order that was way out of bounds: It was for 420 golf balls for a civilian employee at the Army's Aberdeen Proving Ground in Baltimore. Douglas Atwell is now facing up to 15 years in prison after pleading guilty in federal court Wednesday to bribery in a scam to defraud the government. Atwell placed orders from 2003 to 2004 with co-defendant Wayne Silbersack, a salesman for Lawson Products. (AP)



CHORES

Vacuum the Burnt Mattress Ashes Now

A 12-year-old Peru, Ind., girl sick of doing chores set fire to her sleeping mother's bed Monday and took off in the family car to fake the abduction of herself and her two younger siblings, authorities said. "The mom had given



her a lot of duties," sheriff Ken Roland said. "It was too much for a 12-year-old and she snapped." Authorities looking for the girl, her 8-year-old brother and her 6-year-old sister later called her cell phone and talked her into stopping. (AP)

CIRCUSES

The Mane Event

If you have dreams of your newborn child one day becoming a world-famous jockey, it's never too early to get him or her used to the saddle. Of course, you'll have to have access to Thumbelina, billed as the world's smallest horse by Guinness World Records. Thumbelina — standing backstage with owner Michael Goessling at the Big Apple Circus, where she made a brief appearance Thursday in New York — weighs just 58 pounds and stands at 17.5 inches tall. (EXPRESS)



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SMOKING

Quit, or Be Fired

A man who has smoked for more than a decade filed a lawsuit Wednesday against The Scotts Co., alleging the lawn and garden company violated his privacy and civil rights when it fired him because he smokes. Scott Rodrigues, of Bourne, Mass., said he was fired after a drug test came up positive for nicotine. But he said he wasn't told he would be tested for the substance and was told the company would help him quit. (AP)

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WHOLLY GUACAMOLE? A Los Angeles woman is suing Kraft for fraud, claiming the company's guacamole doesn't qualify as the popular dip. The product contains less than 2 percent avocado, which is the traditional main ingredient.

Nation

In Brief

LOUISVILLE, KY.

Mich. Man Recovering After Successful Hand Transplant

A Michigan man who lost his right hand in a work-related accident more than 30 years ago became the third successful hand transplant recipient in the United States, doctors said Thursday. David F. Savage was doing well the day after the surgery at Jewish Hospital in Louisville. Doctors said the transplant for Savage, 54, presented unusual challenges because of the length of time between losing his hand in a machine press and the surgery. The blood vessels leading to Savage's hand had shrunk because they were not in use, said Dr. Warren Breidenbach, the lead surgeon. (AP)

Savage

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HACKENSACK, N.J.

Haagen-Dazs Founder Dies

Rose Mattus, who launched Haagen-Dazs ice cream with her husband, peddling the super-premium treat in grocery stores, has died. She was 90. Mattus died Tuesday, according to Guterman-Musicant Funeral Directors in Hackensack. Mattus had been the controller of Haagen-Dazs Inc. Her husband, Reuben, died in 1994. Even though she had diabetes, Rose Mattus was a fan of her product, particularly vanilla, said her daughter Doris Mattus Hurley. (AP)

Dems Cheer Iraq Panel's Proposals

Commission to call for major withdrawal of U.S. troops in report

WASHINGTON | Democrats in Congress, encouraged that a special commission will recommend a major reduction of U.S. troops in Iraq, say its report next week will serve as a jumping-off point for pressing their case that a withdrawal should begin in 2007.

Plans beyond that are elusive

among members of the majority-in-waiting. Democrats are divided among themselves — and with President Bush — about how many troops to withdraw, when, and where to reassign them.

The report will also press for a greater shift in responsibility for the Iraq's security from American to Iraqi forces, according to an official familiar with the commission. It will also urge an openness to involvement by Syria and Iran in a diplomatic solution to problems in the region.

Choosing Sides in Iraq

→ The Bush administration is debating whether to abandon reconciliation efforts with Sunni insurgents and give priority to Kurds and Shiites. | Today, A1

IN The Washington Post

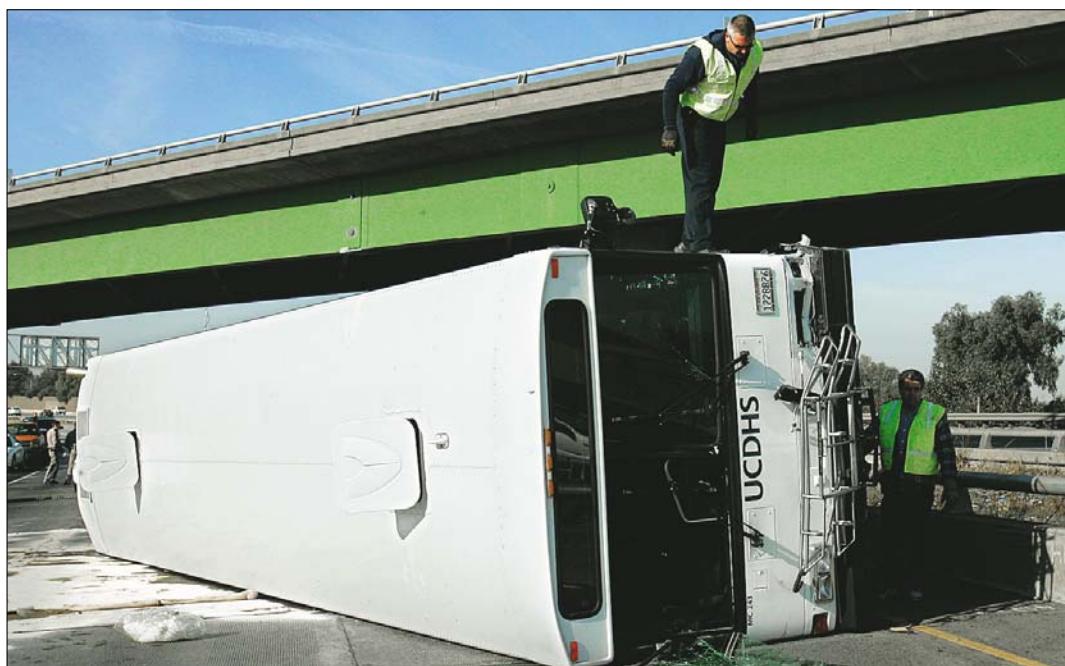
On Thursday, Democrats made clear they liked the details being leaked about the forthcoming report from a panel led by former Secretary of State James A. Baker III and for-

mer Democratic Rep. Lee Hamilton of Indiana. And they warned Bush about the political peril of ignoring its recommendations.

"Sounds to me like they're going in the right direction," Sen. Christopher Dodd, D-Conn., said.

Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., said, "I hope that in the coming weeks the White House will engage in good-faith discussions about how to proceed that will seriously consider the ideas put forward by the study group, as well as other proposals." (AP)

SACRAMENTO, CALIF. | 20 STUDENTS INJURED IN BUS CRASH



ON TOP OF THE SITUATION: A highway patrol officer stands atop an overturned bus carrying University of California-Davis medical students in West Sacramento, Calif., Thursday. Twenty people suffered minor to moderate injuries..

Feds Quietly Grade Travelers For Terror Risk

WASHINGTON | For the past four years, without public notice, federal agents have assigned millions of Americans and other international travelers computer-generated scores assessing the risk they pose of being terrorists or criminals.

The travelers are not allowed to see or directly challenge the assessments. The government intends to keep them on file for 40 years.

Earlier in November, the government disclosed the existence and details of the Automated Targeting System (ATS) for the first time in the Federal Register. Computers assess travel records, motor vehicle records, past one-way travel, seating preference and what kind of meals travelers are ordered to create scores. (AP)

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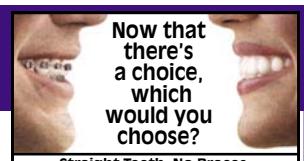
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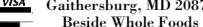
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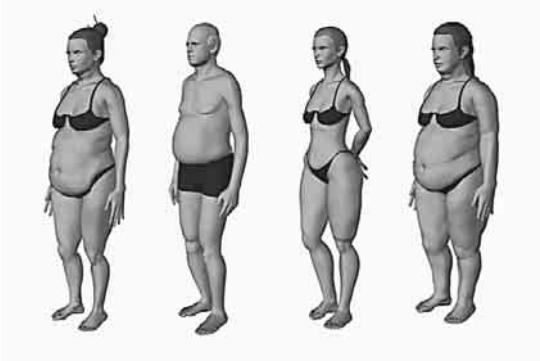
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Dr. Brad Wolf, D.C.

4 | EXPRESS | 12.01.2006 | FRIDAY

Nation



Surrounded by some 500 supporters, Iowa Gov. Tom Vilsack portrayed himself as a Washington outsider on Thursday while announcing his run for the White House.

Vilsack Launches Bid for Presidency

Iowa gov. is the first Democrat to officially enter '08 campaign

MOUNT PLEASANT, IOWA | Iowa Gov. Tom Vilsack announced his candidacy for the Democratic presidential nomination Thursday, positioning himself as a Washington outsider with heartland appeal.

Vilsack also emphasized the nexus between oil dependence, national security and the economy, saying he would give high priority to weaning the nation off foreign oil and promoting alternative energy.

"Energy security will revitalize rural America," Vilsack told more than 500 cheering backers in the small town where he began his political career as mayor. "Energy security will allow us once and for all to remove and reduce our dependence on foreign oil from foreign countries that do not like us."

Taking aim at President Bush, Vilsack said: "We have in the White House a president whose first impulse is to divide and to conquer, who preys on our insecurities and fears for partisan gain."

Instead, Vilsack, the first Democrat to formally enter the race, vowed to have "the courage to create change" and resist the "endless partisan debates."

In an era when voter unhappiness with corruption and partisan wrangling in Washington is especially high, political analysts said Vilsack is particularly well-positioned as a Midwestern governor to run for the White House as an outsider.

Nevertheless, Vilsack has a low profile outside Iowa and even he acknowledges his candidacy is a long shot. MIKE GLOVER (AP)

Trainer Injured in Killer Whale Attack

SAN DIEGO | A killer whale that dragged a trainer underwater twice during a show at SeaWorld Adventure Park may be allowed to perform again, park officials said Thursday.

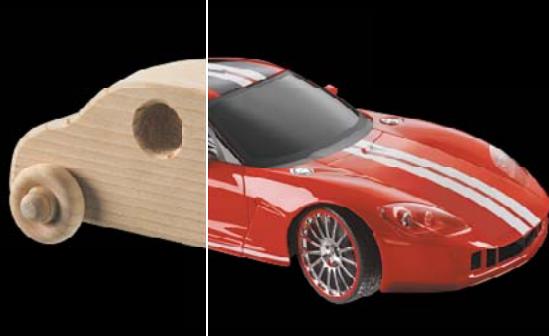
"Animals who have been involved in incidents like this in the past have been allowed to continue performing in the past," said SeaWorld spokesman Dave Koontz. "The

trainers will review the incident and make a determination."

Park trainers were examining the whale, Kasatka, trying to determine what made her grab her trainer. Ken Peters, 39, was "resting comfortably," Koontz said. Peters suffered a fractured metatarsal in his left foot but was otherwise in good spirits, Koontz said. (AP)

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6 | EXPRESS | 12.01.2006 | FRIDAY

Nation

Major Snowstorm Heads Eastward

Warm temperatures give way to wintry mix across Plains, Midwest

KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI | The first major snowstorm of the season blew across the Plains and Midwest on Thursday, grounding hundreds of flights, closing schools, glazing highways and threatening to dump up to a foot of snow on communities that had basked in balmy weather only days earlier.

The wintry weather spread across an area stretching from Texas and Oklahoma to Michigan, and a blizzard warning was posted in parts of Oklahoma.

The system roared through the Northwest and Rockies earlier in the week.

Coming on the heels of near-record high temperatures, it rolled through Kansas on Wednesday, coating tree limbs and power lines with half an inch of ice.

By Thursday, the storm was moving northeast from Oklahoma on the way to Illinois.

Sleet, snow and freezing rain forced the cancellation of 200



Wichita State University sent employees home early due to the heavy snow.

flights out of Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport and closed some schools. In northern Texas, roads were covered with ice and up to 7 inches of snow.

An Oklahoma man was killed Thursday when his vehicle skidded out of control on an icy road and hit an oncoming tractor-trailer, police said. **DANA FIELDS (AP)**

Japanese Scientists Discover New Quakes

Very low frequency temblors are too slow to be felt by humans

WASHINGTON | Japanese researchers have discovered a new and sluggish kind of seismic activity that helps reveal the inner workings of faults capable of producing massive earthquakes like the one that generated the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami.

The so-called "very low frequency" earthquakes join two other types of slow quakes previously detected in the deep portion of subduction zones, where one section of the Earth's crust dives under another. The new kind

of seismic activity can itself produce earthquakes of magnitudes 3 to 3.5, but the temblors are too slow to produce shaking felt by humans.

Researcher Yoshihiro Ito said the newfound activity, along with the two other phenomena — non-volcanic deep tremors and slow slip — may contribute to the build-up of stress in what are known as mega-thrust quake rupture zones.

Ito and colleagues from Japan's National Research Institute for Earth Science and Disaster Prevention describe their work this week in Science Express, the online edition of the journal Science.

ANDREW BRIDGES (AP)

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FILL 'ER UP: Starbucks unveiled its first stores in Brazil, the world's top coffee-growing nation, on Thursday, hoping the shops will be a hit among fickle coffee drinkers used to paying a pittance for super-strong espresso. The chain opened two locations in Sao Paulo.

World

FBI Joins British Poisoning Probe

Radiation detected at a dozen sites in U.K.; ex-prime minister ill

LONDON | The FBI is joining the British probe into the poisoning death of a Kremlin critic, the agency announced Thursday as investigators found traces of radiation at a dozen sites in Britain and a former Russian prime minister reported symptoms consistent with poisoning.

British authorities requested the involvement of the FBI, agency spokesman Richard Kolko said. FBI

experts in weapons of mass destruction will assist with some of the scientific analysis, he said.

There is no suspected link to the U.S. in an investigation that extends to five airliners and locations from London to Moscow. Russian officials said radiation levels were normal on two suspect Russian jets.

Yegor Gaidar, who served briefly as prime minister in the 1990s under Russian President Boris Yeltsin, vomited and then fainted during a conference in Ireland on Nov. 24, a day after ex-KGB agent Alexander Litvinenko died of radiation poisoning. Doctors treating

Gaidar in Moscow believe he was also poisoned, said his spokesman, Valery Natarov.

While Litvinenko was a fierce critic of the Kremlin who during his waning hours blamed President Vladimir Putin for his poisoning, Gaidar, one of the leaders of a liberal opposition party, is a figure with little influence in today's Russia whose moderate criticism of the Kremlin has focused on eco-

nomic issues.

Gaidar's illness has added strands to a growing web of speculation in Russia over the death of Litvinenko and the Oct. 7 killing of investigative reporter Anna Politkovskaya. Some critics see the hand of hard-liners in the country's ruling elite, while Kremlin backers have suggested a murder plot by self-exiled tycoon Boris Berezovsky to blacken the government's reputation.

A dozen sites — including the planes — in Britain have showed traces of radioactivity, Home Secretary John Reid said. (AP)



Gaidar

Rice Seeks To Revive Peace Deal

U.S. envoy urges Palestinians, Israelis to build on Gaza truce

DEAD SEA, JORDAN | Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice tried to build momentum Thursday for a fragile cease-fire agreement between the Israelis and the Palestinians, urging both sides to expand the peace deal beyond the Gaza territory.

But U.S. options were limited, as Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas said he was finished negotiating with radical Islamic militants who assumed control of the Palestinian government in January. Abbas has been trying to create a new unity government that would lift an international aid boycott.

After a blitz of diplomatic meetings, Rice said she was still hopeful the small window of opportunity the cease-fire afforded could be expanded into a long-lasting peace agreement.

Rice met briefly with Abbas in the West Bank town of Jericho before driving to Jerusalem to meet separately with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni. (AP)



NEW TIES: Pope Benedict XVI, left, accompanied by Muslim clerics and other prelates, visits the famed Blue Mosque in Istanbul.

Pope Prays at Turkey's Blue Mosque

Stop marks second papal visit ever to a Muslim worship place

ISTANBUL, TURKEY | Pope Benedict XVI joined an Islamic cleric in prayers under the towering dome of Istanbul's most famous mosque Thursday in a powerful gesture seeking to transform his image among Muslims from adversary to peacemaker.

The pope's minute of prayer was done in silence, but the message of

reconciliation was designed to resonate loudly nearly three months after he provoked worldwide fury for remarks on violence and the Prophet Muhammad.

"This visit will help us find together the way of peace for the good of all humanity," the pope said inside the 17th-century Blue Mosque — in only the second papal visit in history to a Muslim place of worship. Benedict's predecessor, John Paul II, made a brief stop in a mosque in Syria in 2001.

Benedict's steps through a stone

archway and into the mosque capped a day of deep symbolism and lofty goals. Hours earlier, he stood beside the spiritual leader of the world's Orthodox Christians and passionately encouraged steps to end the nearly 1,000-year divide between their churches.

The pope walked to the mosque after touring another majestic tribute to faith: the 1,500-year-old Hagia Sofia, remarkable for its legacy as a marvel of early Christianity and then a coveted prize of Islam's expansion. (AP)

In Brief



Cars burn after an explosion at a checkpoint in Baidoa, Somalia, on Thursday.

MOGADISHU, SOMALIA Suicide Car Bombings Kill 8 Outside of Government Base

A veiled woman and two other suicide bombers exploded cars outside the base of Somalia's weak government Thursday, killing eight people after Ethiopia took another step toward war with its Islamic rivals in the country. Somalia's interim government blamed foreign al-Qaeda fighters for the attack. Earlier Thursday, Ethiopia's parliament authorized military action if attacked by the Islamic movement that controls most of southern Somalia, which has declared holy war on Ethiopia over its troop incursions. (AP)

AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS City Plans to Shut a Third Of Prostitution 'Windows'

The City of Amsterdam said Thursday it is shutting down nearly one-third of the 350 prostitution "windows" in the city's famed red light district, as part of a crackdown on crime in the area. The city said a 2003 law allowed it to deny or revoke prostitutes' licenses when it suspected operators would use them for money laundering or other illegal financial activity, the city said in a statement. (AP)

LONDON BBC: Inquiry Into Diana's Death to Be Released Dec. 14

The official report into the death of Princess Diana — which is widely expected to conclude that the 1997 Paris car crash that killed her was an accident — will be published Dec. 14, the British Broadcasting Corp. reported Thursday. The report is the result of a three-year inquiry into the crash by former Metropolitan Police chief Lord Stevens. (AP)

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39

The percentage of Spanish university students who said immigration is good, down from 47.9 percent three years ago, a poll finds. Some 15 percent felt immigration was a bad thing.

World

Call for Lebanon Protests

Hezbollah urges mass anti-government demonstrations Friday

BEIRUT, LEBANON | Hezbollah and its pro-Syrian allies launched a long-threatened campaign to topple Lebanon's U.S.-backed government, calling for mass demonstration Friday followed by a wave of open-ended protests.

A defiant Prime Minister Fuad Saniora vowed his government would not fall, warning in a nationally televised speech Thursday night that "Lebanon's independence is threatened and its democratic system is in danger."

The call for protests threatens to throw a political power struggle between pro- and anti-Syrian factions into a violent showdown in sharply divided Lebanon.

Government supporters accuse Syria of being behind the Hezbollah-led protests, trying to regain its lost influence in its smaller neighbor. Hezbollah and its allies, in turn, say the country has fallen under U.S. domination and that they have been squeezed out of a rightful portion of power.

Fears were high that Friday's protest could turn into street clashes between the two sides or



WATCHFUL EYE: A Lebanese soldier stands guard in front of the Government Palace in Beirut on Thursday. Security is tight amid calls for mass street protests Friday.

Future in the Balance

→ The call by Hezbollah's leader for a protest and open-ended sit-in marks the sharpest escalation yet in a crisis that may decide the direction of Lebanese politics for years to come. | **Today, A Section**

IN The Washington Post

that Hezbollah supporters could try to storm Saniora's government complex in downtown Beirut. Lebanese security forces have deployed troops, barbed wire and armored vehicles outside the offices for days.

Hezbollah's leader, Sheik Hassan Nasrallah, called for Friday's protest to be peaceful. From the other camp, the head of the anti-Syrian bloc in parliament, Saad Hariri, said his supporters should not hold counter-demonstrations.

Lebanon's power struggle pits opponents of Syria against its allies. Tensions are high on both sides after a string of assassinations of anti-Syrian figures over the past two years, including a prominent Christian government minister gunned down last week. (AP)

Chavez: Pre-Election Attack Foiled

Venezuelan leader says plot against opponent thwarted ahead of vote



Recent polls have given President Hugo Chavez the lead in Sunday's election.

seized the weapon from a vehicle, but he didn't say whether anyone was detained.

But Rosales' campaign denied any knowledge of such an incident.

"This is a smoke screen. It's to manipulate the people, but nobody

believes that," said Timoteo Zambrano, one of Rosales' campaign managers.

Chavez also urged his enemies to respect the result of Sunday's vote, saying an upset would be impossible.

Chavez spoke to reporters on the final day of campaigning, a day after Rosales urged the government to stick to the rules in the vote.

Venezuela has become increasingly polarized along class lines, with the wealthier supporting Rosales, the poor backing Chavez and a fractured middle class.

Shoppers are packing supermarkets to stock up on supplies, fearful that Sunday's outcome could prompt street protests and violence. (AP)

Chavez said authorities had

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World



YOUR LEAD: Some former Canadian leaders are trying to inspire young, civic-minded types on a new reality TV show. Ex-Prime Ministers Brian Mulroney, John Turner, Joe Clark and Kim Campbell will be judges on the CBC's "The Next Great Prime Minister."

Sudan Rejects U.N. Troops Anew

AU extends mandate to patrol Darfur region for another 6 months

ABUJA, NIGERIA | Sudan's president rejected a proposal Thursday to send U.N. peacekeepers to Darfur to boost a beleaguered 7,000-member African Union force, crushing hopes for a quick solution to the violence spreading across central Africa.

Sudan, the U.N. and the AU earlier agreed to a hybrid mission. But there was confusion over the details, with some Sudanese officials saying they only want U.N. support in the form of finance and logistics, not the replacement U.N. troops foreseen in

a Security Council resolution.

Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir, speaking after a closed-door AU summit, rebuffed African leaders advocating a compromise proposal for an expanded peace-keeping mission that would include U.N. soldiers inside Darfur.

"We can take technical, advisory and financial support from the U.N., but no U.N. force," al-Bashir said. "We want an Africa force."

African leaders, however, extended the mandate of the AU force deployed in Darfur by six months, the AU's peace and security commissioner Said Djinnit told reporters. The mission's mandate was set to expire Dec. 31.

DULUE MBACHU (AP)

INDIA | LIGHTING THE WAY FOR WORLD AIDS DAY



MANPREET ROMANA/AP/GT/GETTY IMAGES

REMEMBRANCE: A woman lights candles on Thursday in the shape of a symbolic AIDS ribbon during a candlelight vigil in New Delhi, India, ahead of World AIDS Day on Friday. This year's theme for World AIDS Day is "accountability" and is designed to inspire citizens to hold their leaders accountable for the promises they have made in the fight against AIDS.

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GO, ARMY: The Army agreed Thursday to move a planned national Army museum after criticism from Fairfax, Va., officials about the location. The Army now plans to locate the National Museum of the U.S. Army near the county's Route 1 corridor.

Local

Metrorail Train Kills Track Worker

Another critically hurt in accident, the second such fatal one this year

ALEXANDRIA, VA. | An out-of-service Metrorail train struck two workers Thursday, killing one and critically injuring the other, officials said.

It was the second death among workers in the area's transit system this year and the 14th in Metro's

30-year history.

The accident occurred about 9:30 a.m. on an elevated section of track between the Huntington and Eisenhower Avenue stations on the Yellow Line. The train involved had no passengers on board and was headed to a rail yard in Alexandria.

Metro identified the worker who died as Leslie A. Cherry, a 29-year employee from Maryland. The injured employee began working

for the transit system in April.

The two employees were "track walkers" and were doing routine inspections, Metro said. Mark Rosenker, chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board, said the workers knew they were on an active track.

Both the NTSB and Metro were investigating.

"Obviously, something terrible has gone wrong," said Jack

Requa, acting general manager of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.

Rosenker said investigators retrieved the train's vehicle monitoring system, which he compared to an airplane's flight data recorder.

MATTHEW BARAKAT (AP)



Federal response: NTSB officials give Metro harsh rebuke after "unacceptable" accident. **Today's Post,**

Ghost of Christmas Past at Bushes'

White House returns to a traditional look for 24 holiday parties

WASHINGTON | A year after experimenting with fresh flower decorations, the White House is returning to a more traditional Christmas look for its 24 holiday parties.

First lady Laura Bush said the White House's Red Room was the inspiration for the 2006 holiday theme — "Deck the Halls and Welcome All." Almost 300 wreaths are on display, in addition to poinsettias, topiaries and a variety of garlands adorned with red and silver Christmas balls.



A portrait of Abraham Lincoln in the East Room is surrounded Thursday by holiday decorations as first lady Laura Bush previewed the 2006 holiday decorations.

"This is a beautiful old house to decorate for Christmas, and since red is one of the predominant colors it really is perfect for Christmas decorations," she said while standing in front of the traditional 300-pound gingerbread White House on display in the State Dining Room.

The State Floor's centerpiece is a Douglas fir covered in glass and crystal ornaments — some tied up with red ribbons — as well as a smattering of fake snow. The first lady pointed out that the Blue Room's chandelier was removed to secure the 18-foot, 6-inch tree.

She said the first family had decorated a private tree with ornaments brought from Texas. They also have a collection of nativity scenes the first lady has collected from around the world. NATASHA T. METZLER (AP)

The Lotteries

Thursday, November 30

DISTRICT

Mid-day Lucky Numbers	0-8-7
Evening Lucky Numbers (Wed.)	6-9-6
Mid-day DC 4	4-7-2-3
Evening DC 4 (Wed.)	6-3-8-0
Rolling Cash Five (Wed.)	I-12-17-19-28
Daily 6 (Wed.)	I-7-29-20-23-26-36 (5)
Hot Lotto (Wed.)	I-0-21-27-32-37 (I)

MARYLAND

Mid-day Pick 3	6-9-7
Evening Pick 3 (Wed.)	8-6-6
Mid-day Pick 4	5-1-7-3
Evening Pick 4 (Wed.)	5-6-2-1
Match 5 (Wed.)	I-4-15-24-26-39 (I8)
Multi-Match (Wed.)	5-8-30-32-33-39

VIRGINIA

Mid-day Pick 3	3-9-0
Evening Pick 3 (Wed.)	1-6-8
Mid-day Pick 4	7-4-5-5
Evening Pick 4 (Wed.)	2-1-5-1
Mid-day Cash 5	2-4-15-16-30
Evening Cash 5 (Wed.)	3-14-20-26-31
Win For Life (Wed.)	6-21-23-24-25-34 (I2)

MULTI-STATE GAMES

Powerball (Wed.)	2-8-9-12-19 (25)
Power Play	x3

All winning numbers are official only when validated at a lottery ticket location or a lottery claims office. Drawings that occur after Express's deadline will be published two days later.



BY THE NUMBERS:
House of Blues is negotiating to build a \$120 million complex near the Washington Convention Center. (AP)

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Money

401(k) Plan Fees Not Always Clear

GAO report calls for better rules on how charges are disclosed

WASHINGTON | Participants in 401(k) plans may be losing thousands of dollars in retirement savings because of sponsor fees, a report said Thursday, in urging investors be given a clearer picture of the fees they pay.

Current retirement savings law, passed in 1974, does not explicitly require 401(k) plan sponsors to disclose comprehensive information on fees, the Government Accountability Office said.

The GAO gave as an example a 45-year-old person who leaves \$20,000 in a 401(k) account until retirement. If the average net return is 6.5 percent — a 7 percent investment return minus a 0.5 percent charge for fees — the account will grow to \$70,500 at retirement. But if the fee is 1.5 percent, the person

will have only \$58,400 when he retires.

The report said Congress should consider amending current law to require sponsors to disclose fee information in a way that allows investors to compare options. The Department of Labor, it said, should require plan sponsors to report a summary of all fees paid out of plan assets or by participants.

Investment fees make up the bulk of charges in 401(k) plans, but some plans also charge for record-keeping and other costs.

The report also urged a closer look at conflict-of-interest problems that arise because pension consultants aren't required to disclose that they are being paid by investment companies that they are recommending to plan sponsors.

The report noted that in the past 20 years, 401(k) plan members have gone from 8 million to 47 million, and assets in these plans have grown to more than \$2 trillion. (AP)



POUNDED: The pound hit a 14-year high against the dollar Thursday, providing a boon for British tourists in the U.S. but raising fears for exporters as analysts predict a further slump in the U.S. currency. The pound hit US\$1.9696, its strongest showing against the dollar since September 1992, when Britain left the European Exchange Rate Mechanism. (AP)

Market Action

New York Stock Exchange

Gainers

STOCK	LAST	DAILY CHANGE	DAILY PERCENT CHANGE
DSW Inc	38.30	+4.59	+13.6
Medifast	13.05	+1.44	+12.4
RetailVent	19.03	+1.97	+11.5
vjGrace	18.37	+1.85	+11.2
StdPac	25.66	+2.40	+10.3

Losers

STOCK	LAST	DAILY CHANGE	DAILY PERCENT CHANGE
ChrisBnk	18.79	-1.54	-7.6
FstFinFd	17.10	-1.10	-6.0
HancFab	3.19	-.19	-.56
Pengrth g	17.04	-.96	-.53
OffcDpt	37.86	-1.93	-4.9

Rates

	CURRENT	PREVIOUS WEEK
Prime Rate	8.25	8.25
Fed Funds close	5.3125	5.25
3-month disc	4.90	4.93
2-year	4.62	4.75
10-year	4.46	4.56
30-year	4.56	4.65

NASDAQ Stock Market

Gainers

STOCK	LAST	DAILY CHANGE	DAILY PERCENT CHANGE
DurectCp	4.68	+.88	+23.2
AbngtnCm	19.48	+.60	+22.7
RandCap	3.94	+.71	+22.0
Bsquare	2.86	+.51	+21.7
Iomain	5.09	...	

Losers

STOCK	LAST	DAILY CHANGE	DAILY PERCENT CHANGE
SelCmfrt s	17.28	-.71	-17.7
WirRonin n	5.92	-.26	-17.5
HlterTch	2.18	-.46	-17.4
SCO Grp	2.00	-.40	-16.7
XetaTech	3.43	-.57	-14.3

Currency (Dollars in foreign currency)

	TODAY	PREVIOUS DAY	YEAR AGO
British Pound	.5086	.5138	.5784
Canadian Dollar	1.1420	1.1380	1.1645
European Euro	.7547	.7601	.8481
Japanese Yen	115.75	116.31	119.81
Mexican Peso	10.9757	11.0108	10.5510
Taiwanese Dollar	32.37	32.50	33.47

In Brief

NEW YORK

Wal-Mart Predicts Slim Sales Gains in December

Wal-Mart Stores Inc. issued a sobering warning for the U.S. holiday shopping season Thursday, predicting its December same-store sales gain would be no better than 1 percent. The news, coupled with Wal-Mart's announcement that it suffered its first same-store decline in more than 10 years during November, came as the nation's retailers reported an overall mixed sales performance for the month. Wal-Mart has struggled in recent months on a mix of problems, including that its lower-income customers were hurt by soaring gas prices. (AP)

NEW YORK

Microsoft Rolls Out New Vista Operating System

Microsoft Corp. launched its first new computer operating system in five years Thursday, saying that despite delays, the product's emergence is perfectly timed for PC users who increasingly need to coordinate information from a dizzying array of sources. Businesses that buy Windows licenses in bulk have first crack at PCs with the new operating system or at upgrade discs for installing Vista on existing machines. Consumers will not be able to get Vista on home PCs until Jan. 30. (AP)

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Sports Weekend

Sports

CAPITALS

New Addition: Brian Pothier left the playoff-bound Senators to join the porous Washington defense. But he's loving every minute. | **20**



TV Lineup



Caron Butler scores the go-ahead basket vs. the Hawks while getting fouled.

→ **STREAKING?** The Wizards are looking to start a win streak Friday when they host the Bobcats (7 p.m. on CSN) and Saturday (8:30 p.m. on CW) when they visit the struggling Bulls.

→ **YOUNG BLOOD:** Sunday's NFL coverage features some of the game's youngest QBs.

Joey Harrington and the Dolphins visit David Garrard and the Jaguars (4:15 p.m. on CBS). And Tony Romo and the Cowboys battle

Eli Manning and the Giants (4:15 p.m. on FOX). The finale stars veteran Matt Hasselbeck and the Seahawks and Jay Cutler starting his first game for the Broncos (8:15 p.m. on NBC).

→ **TURN AROUND:** The month of November was not a good one for the Capitals, only winning five games.

But they can start a stronger push for December when they host the Eastern Conference leading Buffalo Sabres on Saturday (8 p.m. on CSN).

→ **DOWN TO THIS:** Saturday, No. 16 Wake Forest and No. 23 Georgia Tech battle in the ACC title game (1 p.m. on ABC), while the only thing preventing No. 2 USC from playing for the national championship is its game with UCLA (4:30 p.m. on ABC). The evening begins with the SEC Championship (6 p.m. on CBS) featuring No. 8 Arkansas and No. 4 Florida and finishes with the Big 12 Championship game pitting No. 19 Nebraska against No. 8 Oklahoma.

Slick Vick

Before the Redskins can think playoffs, they must get by the Falcons

REDSKINS | Playing on the Redskins' defense is starting to look a little like being on "The Surreal Life," sans Flava Flav.

First, they lose five of six games to get bounced out of the playoff picture. Next, ESPN the Magazine comes out with a story in which someone squeals about how arrogant the coaching staff supposedly is. Then — despite the suggested lack of coaching — the defense executes a good game plan and holds the potential NFC South champions to 13 points in a victory.



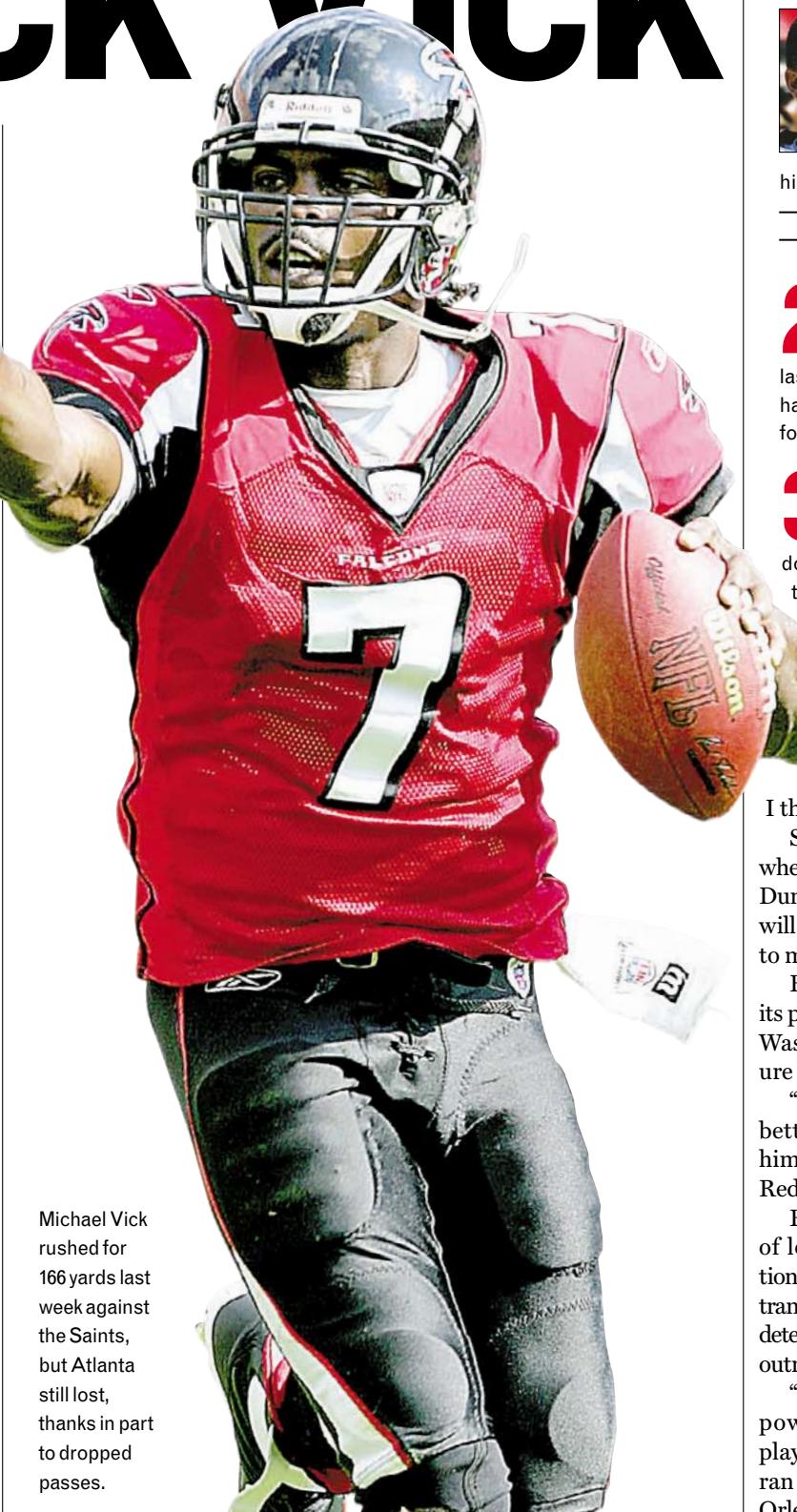
Throw in some surprise losses by front-running NFC squads, and the locals are whispering about Washington running the table again.

Cause for a "YEEEAH BOOY-EEEE!"?

Maybe later. There's still a lot of work to do.

Next up are the Falcons — and finger-flippin' quarterback Ron Mexico ... er, Michael Vick — who come to FedEx Field sporting a nasty case of bird flu on offense.

Atlanta looked ugly in last weekend's 31-13 loss to New Orleans, with receivers dropping multiple passes. And while Vick ran for 166 yards in the loss, the Falcons' backs have also put up uncharacteristically low numbers in the last few weeks.

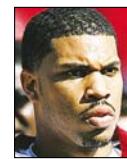


Michael Vick rushed for 166 yards last week against the Saints, but Atlanta still lost, thanks in part to dropped passes.



OLYMPICS | **Don't Eat the Pork Fried Rice** A senior Chinese official has warned that athletes competing in the 2008 Beijing Olympics could test positive for drugs after eating in local restaurants. Chinese doping experts have warned that some Chinese food is so contaminated with anabolic steroids that athletes who eat it could later fail drug tests. Chinese farmers regularly give steroids to their livestock to get better prices for larger animals. Surveillance will be installed to monitor the food coming into the Olympic Village. (AP)

Three Burning QUESTIONS



1 Jason Campbell: King of Cool?

Washington's rookie QB has looked poised in his first two games. Will Atlanta — third in the NFC with 29 sacks — change that?

2 More turnovers?

Washington's forced a pair of turnovers in each of the last two games. However, Atlanta has a plus-six turnover margin — fourth-best in the NFC.

3 Birds cooked in red zone?

Atlanta is second-worst in the NFL with just 13 touchdowns in 36 possessions inside the opponents' 20.

"We've played some 'Bad News Bears' football," Atlanta tailback Warrick Dunn said. "Our identity is running the football, and I think we got away from that."

Stopping the running game — whether its traditional handoffs to Dunn or crazy scrambles by Vick — will still be priority No. 1, according to most Redskins defenders.

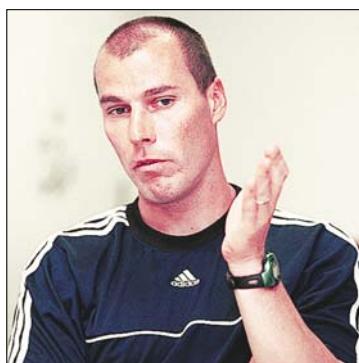
But if Atlanta (5-6) stays with its pass-and-scramble philosophy, Washington (4-7) will have to figure out a way to stop Vick.

"In most cases, he's so much better than the guy who's spying him. ... He just makes plays," said Redskins safety Troy Vincent.

Even a second straight week of locking down on the opposition's receivers won't automatically translate into stops, since Vick seems determined to pull the ball down and outrun his team's shortcomings.

"I am trying everything in my power to prevent [missing the playoffs]," he said. "That's why I ran the ball so much [against New Orleans]."

ERIC BRANDNER



ANDREW SHURTLEFF/AP

Virginia soccer coach George Gelnovitch will lead his team against UCLA.

Va. to Face UCLA in Semifinals

COLLEGE SOCCER | The Virginia men's soccer team is back in the NCAA College Cup final four for the first time in nine years, a long wait for a program that became the sport's most prominent by winning five national titles in six years (1989-1994).

The fourth-seeded Cavaliers (17-3-1) face long-time power UCLA in Friday's first semifinal in St. Louis. The rematch of the 1997 NCAA final that the Bruins won will be televised live at 6 p.m. Friday on ESPN2, and the winner takes either second-seeded Wake Forest or UC Santa Barbara in Sunday's final.

Virginia is led by sophomore Yannick Reyering (12 goals) and senior Adam Cristman (10) and will look to keep the College Cup title in the ACC. Maryland won its second title last season but was knocked out by Notre Dame in the

With Portis injured, Duckett looks to prove his worth vs. old team

REDSKINS | After hearing all the trade rumors during training camp, T.J. Duckett was relieved when the Atlanta Falcons finally dealt him to the Washington Redskins.

Little did he know that life with the Redskins would turn into another long state of uncertainty.

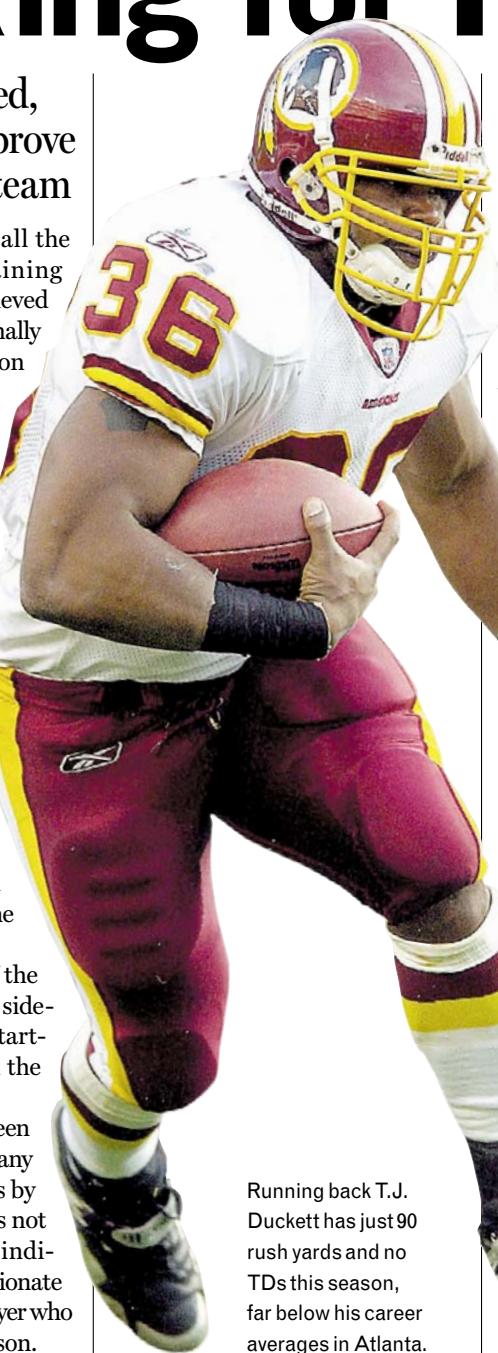
"It's similar," Duckett said Thursday as he sat at his locker. "But after going through what I went through there, it prepared me for this."

Duckett's locker is the one closest to the exit, which is appropriate given how long it has taken for him to get a proverbial foot in the door with the Redskins.

After spending most of the season watching from the sidelines, he has only recently started to play a regular role in the offense.

The Duckett trade has been a complex development on many levels, as a week never goes by in which coach Joe Gibbs is not asked about it directly or indirectly, creating a disproportionate amount of attention for a player who has only 19 carries this season.

It started when the Falcons draft-



Running back T.J. Duckett has just 90 rush yards and no TDs this season, far below his career averages in Atlanta.

ed Jerious Norwood in April, making Duckett expendable. When he was placed on the trading block, the Redskins pounced for two reasons: They wanted insurance after Clinton Portis hurt his shoulder, and they didn't want Duckett going to a rival team in the NFC.

The Falcons wanted a receiver in return, so a three-way deal was made with Denver. The Broncos sent Ashley Lelie to Atlanta, Duckett went to Washington, and the Redskins gave Denver the equivalent value of a 2007 third-round pick.

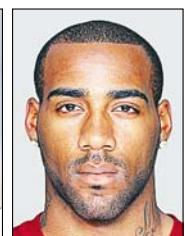
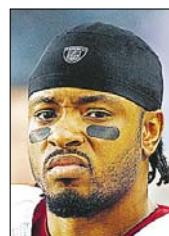
All was fine except the Redskins already had backups for Portis. Ladell Betts and Rock Cartwright are solid backs, and fullback Mike Sellers handles the short yardage runs in which Duckett has been known to excel.

As a result, Duckett couldn't get on the field. He didn't have a carry in seven of the first eight games. Only in the last couple of weeks has Duckett been given some work to give Betts a breather.

He had a season-high seven carries for 24 yards in last week's win over Carolina.

Complicating matters for T.J. is his contract status. He's due to be a free

HEAD TO HEAD



SANTANA MOSS

DEANGELO HALL

→ Can the Redskins' top wide receiver have a big game against one of the NFL's premier corners?

Moss and Hall are basically the same size and have the same speed. So for Moss to succeed against the Falcons' interception leader, he must use his veteran smarts against the young Hall. In past weeks, Hall has gotten burned for big plays by making careless mistakes. If Santana can get DeAngelo to do the same thing this week and play too aggressively, he may be able to sneak by and make a big play.

agent at the end of the season. The 2002 first-round draft pick ran for 2,175 yards and scored 31 touchdowns over four seasons with the Falcons, but has only 90 yards rushing and no TDs this season.

But Duckett hasn't griped about his playing time.

"This is a guy who, when his back is against the wall, doesn't come out verbally," said Atlanta running back Warrick Dunn. "He just waits his time and is patient." JOSEPH WHITE (AP)

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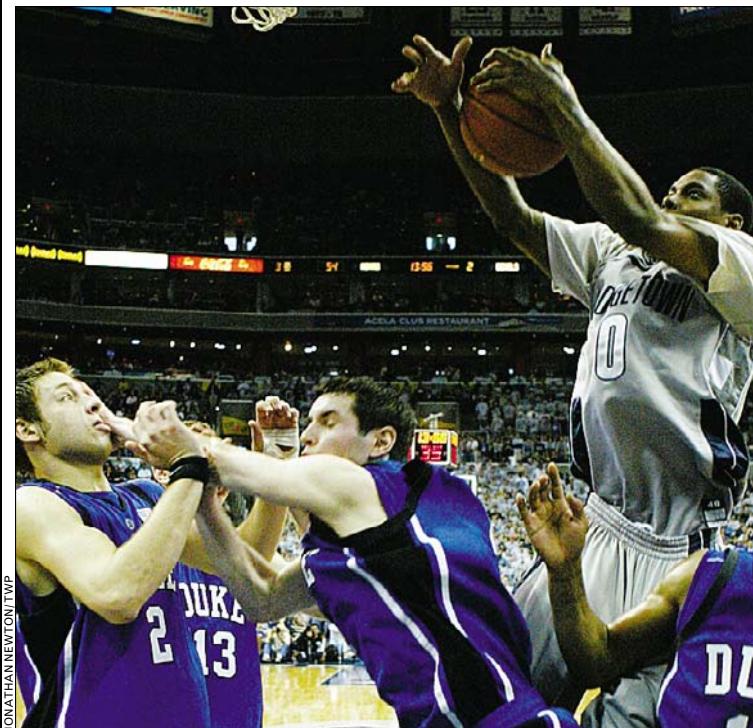
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Georgetown's Ashanti Cook grabs a rebound during last season's upset of the No. 1 squad. Cook, who graduated, will not be around to help the struggling Hoyas this year.

Hoyas Youth Is Still Settling In

Georgetown struggling but not panicking after 2 early-season losses

HOYAS HOOPS | When coach John Thompson III first started talking about baby steps with his Georgetown basketball team, he probably didn't mean it quite as literally as it's played out.

With only three key players returning from last year's squad, which defeated then-No. 1 Duke and went on to the Sweet 16, the No. 18 Hoyas are struggling as they head to Cameron Indoor Stadium Saturday night for a rematch with the No. 11 Blue Devils (6-1).

Ranked No. 8 in preseason polls, Georgetown is in danger of falling out of the top 25 following an opening month that included upset losses to Old Dominion on Nov. 19 and Oregon Wednesday at Verizon Center.

"We're tentative, we're unsure, we are growing," said Thompson after the 57-50 loss. "We're a young team. I knew we had a long way to go. I thought we would work through it without the losses."

The Hoyas (4-2) were expected to ride star juniors Jonathan Wallace, Jeff Green and Roy Hibbert to the same sort of success experienced under Thompson's father.

Instead, the absence of last year's senior guards Ashanti Cook and Brandon Bowman is looming larger than many imagined on a team with seven freshmen or sophomores.

"They're going to be really good once the guards settle down and get some games under their belt," said Oregon coach Ernie Kent, whose team lost at home to Georgetown last year.

As they wait for their youngsters to gain experience, the Hoyas' "Princeton" offense is hardly working. The team committed 17 turnovers Wednesday while Hibbert and Green combined for nine points. Wallace, for his part, led all scorers with 17 points.

Wallace, like Thompson, isn't panicking on the young season.

"I feel very confident," said Wallace. "It's November. Guys are going to have to step up and learn the ropes quickly."

MATT SWENSON (EXPRESS)

Swengali

WIZARDS | BY MATT SWENSON

Wizards Off to A Familiar Start

CALL IT NOSTALGIA following a 10-year high school reunion, but it seems like old times in Washington.

Wearing burgundy pants, the Redskins won a game by running the ball and playing good defense.

On the opposite side of the spectrum, one of our other favorite local teams is on pace for the same 9-20 record we know and love. I'll give you a hint: Right now, they're firing blanks, especially on the road.

Luckily for the former Bullets, that 5-9 start (0-7 away from Verizon Center) isn't going to hurt their playoff chances. The Eastern Conference is beyond bad right now. My beloved Bethesda-Chevy Chase Barrons could make a run at the postseason at this rate.

Of more concern is star point guard Gilbert Arenas' excuses for the lousy play. Instead of taking the

blame himself for not shooting well, Arenas thinks the referees are at fault. "At the end of the day, I don't think they are calling the game the same way they called it last year," he told The Washington Post.

Give me a break. Twice this year, Arenas — a genuine All-Star — has scored fewer than 10 points in a game. He's also averaging almost

The team needs to focus on its own deficiencies ... before worrying about the zebras.

four turnovers per game, nullifying about two-thirds of his 6.5 assists per contest.

The team needs to focus on its own deficiencies — defense is still nonexistent — before worrying about the zebras.

The calls will come, just as soon as the shots start to fall. It's funny how that works out.

@ To reach Matt Swenson, e-mail matt.swenson@readexpress.com

Defensive Struggle

Even after summer of emphasis, high-scoring games plague Wizards

WIZARDS | It came like a chorus of planned responses from the Verizon Center all offseason.

"We have to play defense," Wizards guard Gilbert Arenas said. "We know that. We have to become a better defensive team."

Or as Etan Thomas put it: "Coach has made it very clear that that's going to be a point of emphasis this year."

"Defensively, we don't have to be top five, but we have to be in the middle of the pack as far as letting our opponents score," Antawn Jamison added.

The players knew from Day One that allowing 99.8 points per game (the ninth worst average in the NBA last year) was not going to cut it for a team that openly said it wanted to make the Eastern Conference finals.

So the obvious question to the



are nowhere near the middle of the pack.

In a lot of ways, though, this Wizards team isn't set up to be a team that limits scoring. They run the floor well and they average more than 19 fast-break points per game. More fast-breaks mean more possessions and, eventually, more scoring — for both teams.

They're doing a decent job protecting the rim, especially recently, and have allowed opponents to shoot over 42 percent from the floor just once in the last five games.

"All we need is a shot here or a call there and we're winning these games," Caron Butler said after last week's loss to the Rockets. "Tonight, we played good defense, and we've overcome a lot of adversity. We can grow on this."

IAN HERBERT (EXPRESS)

State of the Team: A look at why the Wizards are four games below .500 this season | Today's Post, Sports

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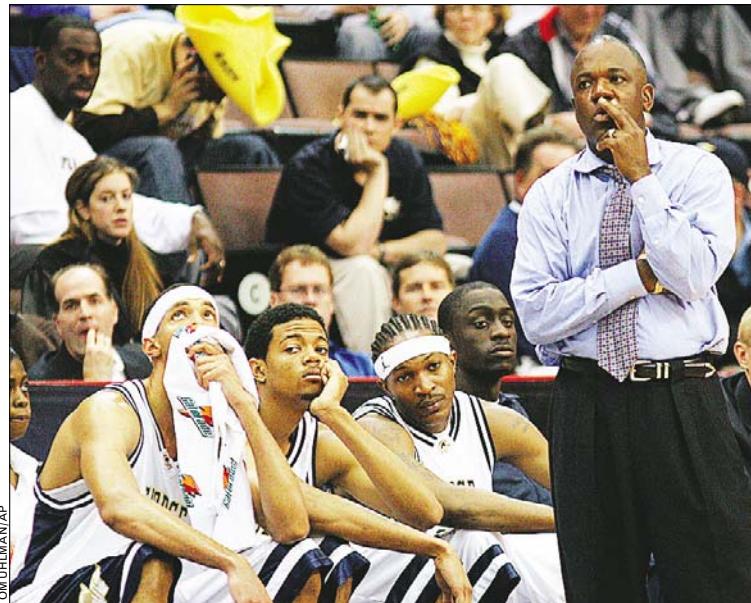
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Weekend | Sports



George Washington coach Karl Hobbs, right, watches with his players as his team loses for just the second time all year last year in the Atlantic-10 Tournament.

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Tough Year for Buff and Blue

With young squad,
GW is still hoping to
return to tournament

COLONIALS HOOPS | As the Colonials hit the court for their 2006-2007 campaign, many of the familiar faces that led George Washington to a program-best 27-3 record are nowhere to be seen around Foggy Bottom.

Three standout starters, Pops Mensah-Bonsu, Mike Hall and Omar Williams, graduated and junior star forward Danilo Pinnoch left early for the NBA Draft, leaving the Colonials with just one starter from last year's team.

So that's why coach Karl Hobbs understands that his team's goals — to defend their Atlantic-10 title and make it to their third straight NCAA tournament — are not going to be easy.

"Defending our A-10 title will be extremely difficult this year as the conference is the most competitive it's ever been since I have been coaching at GW," he said. "Most of the programs have everyone back and their veteran squads will provide a challenge for our young team."

Nevertheless, Hobbs believes in his young team, especially under the

veteran leadership of starting point guard, senior Carl Elliott.

Elliott, the Colonials leading scorer this season at 15.6 points per game, says that both his play and leadership have changed greatly. This season he has become more vocal with the young Colonials squad and more aggressive on the court.

"I have had to step up my game, and, being one of the only seniors

LOCAL HOOPS HEAVEN

The BB&T Classic is this Sunday at Verizon Center, featuring a trio of local games:

- George Mason vs. Bucknell at 1:30 p.m.
- George Washington vs. Virginia Tech at 4 p.m.
- No. 23 Maryland vs. Notre Dame at 6:30 p.m.

on the team, have had to instruct the young guys more," Elliott said — young guys such as sophomore Rob Diggins and freshmen Damian Hollis and Travis King, all of who are expected to play key roles throughout the season.

"But I still feel that if we execute on the fundamentals, defending, and especially rebounding, we can play with some of the best teams in the country." DREW RIFKIN

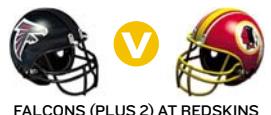
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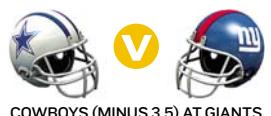
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REDSKINS
Everyone is beat-
ing the Falcons right
now.



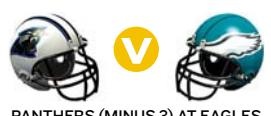
DOLPHINS
Don't look now, but
Joey Harrington is
unstoppable.



COWBOYS
The way both teams
are playing, it seems
too easy to pick the
favorite. It isn't.



BRONCOS
Shanahan, like
Gibbs, should have
started his young QB
weeks ago.



PANTHERS
Last week's embar-
rassment at FedEx
Field should scare the
Panthers straight.



JETS
Would the Pack take
Brady Quinn if they
get the first pick in
the draft?

REDSKINS
Everyone is beat-
ing the Falcons right
now.

REDSKINS
It's hard to pick the
Redskins, but harder
to pick the Falcons.

REDSKINS
Vick's finger is no
match for Sean
Taylor's helmet.

REDSKINS
Campbell's arrival
turned into a win last
week because the D
decided to play.

DOLPHINS
Harrington's looked
like Dan Marino in
recent weeks. OK,
maybe an old Marino.

DOLPHINS
Dolphins usually win
the games they are
supposed to lose.

DOLPHINS
Miami is making its
annual "too late"
charge.

COWBOYS
I'll pick even the self-
destructing Giants
when they're getting
points at home.

GIANTS
Plaxico has more atti-
tude than T.O. And
Romo had five touch-
downs last week.

COWBOYS
Giants are at a low
point, Cowboys at a
high point. But the
NFC is too bizarre.

GIANTS
Remember that Cutler
is a raw rookie, not like
Romo, who sat and
watched for years.

BRONCOS
Cutler is just what
this team needs to
get things restarted.

BRONCOS
With Alexander back,
this team suddenly
remembered they are
pretty good.

SEAHAWKS
Remember that Cutler
is a raw rookie, not like
Romo, who sat and
watched for years.

SEAHAWKS
Look for ESPN to
use its lengthy booth
time for a McNabb-
T.O. debate.

PANTHERS
The Eagles need
someone other than
Jeff Garcia to get
restarted.

PANTHERS
The Eagles still have
Westbrook, and
Garcia is fighting to
keep his job.

EAGLES
The Eagles still have
Westbrook, and
Garcia is fighting to
keep his job.

PANTHERS
The Jets are a mid-
dling team. Like
everyone else.

JETS
The Packers have
beaten the Lions,
Cardinals, Vikings
and Dolphins. Scary!

JETS
Favre wasn't him-
self in Seattle, but is
due for a big game
against Gang Green.

PACKERS
The Jets are a mid-
dling team. Like
everyone else.

SEASON TALLY | Matt Swenson: 32-34-4; Ian Herbert: 28-38-4; Celebrities: 40-41-5; Dave Goldberg: 19-26-2; Linda Cropp: 4-1 (leader)

Different Ways To Pick a Champ

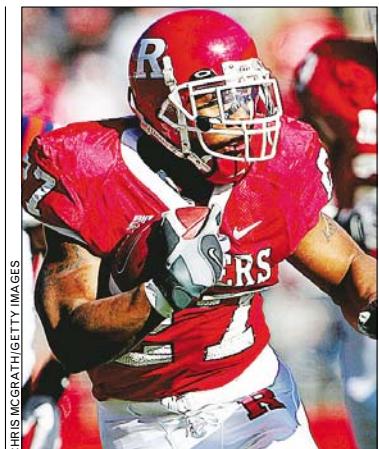
Even the conferences
without championship
games have excitement

COLLEGE PICKS | As great as a conference championship game can be, and there are five being played in the next three days, deciding a league champ the old-fashioned way can be fun.

That's what the Big East will do Saturday when Rutgers plays at West Virginia and Louisville hosts Connecticut. The picks:

→ **NO. 4 FLORIDA (MINUS 3) VS. NO. 8 ARKANSAS.** Gators have won five of six meetings with Razorbacks ... **ARKANSAS 27-21.**

→ **NO. 8 OKLAHOMA (MINUS 3 1/2) VS. NO. 19 NEBRASKA.** First time since '88 Huskers and Sooners have played with championship at stake ... **OKLAHOMA 28-20.**



Rutgers running back Ray Rice takes his team up against the Mountaineers.

→ **NO. 13 RUTGERS (PLUS 9 1/2) AT NO. 15 WEST VIRGINIA.** Mountaineers haven't lost to Scarlet Knights since 1994 ... **WEST VIRGINIA 37-21.**

→ **NO. 16 WAKE FOREST (PLUS 2 1/2) VS. NO. 23 GEORGIA TECH.** Yellow Jackets have won eight of 10 in series ... **GEORGIA TECH 24-23.** RALPH D. RUSSO (AP)

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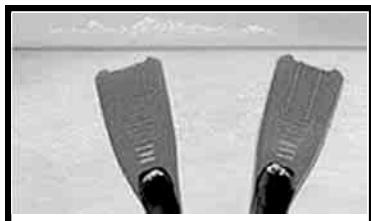


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Caps defender Brian Pothier vies for the puck with the Islanders' Alexie Yashin during a 4-1 loss in New York last week. Pothier brings experience to a young defense.

Pothier Taking The Lead in D.C.

Player embraces his role as elder statesman on new, young defense

CAPITALS | Last summer, defenseman Brian Pothier left the Ottawa Senators, one of the NHL's most successful franchises, to man the blue line for a young Washington Capitals team that struggles to win consistently, lags far behind their Canadian capital counterparts in popularity and doesn't exactly make it easy on its defenseman. He couldn't be happier.

"I love it. I'm so happy," he said. "I love the area and this team is just dynamic. It's so energetic, so enthusiastic and guys work so hard. It's so much fun to be in this locker room, so I'm just pumped."

Pothier, 29, was born in Massachusetts and played his college hockey at Rensselaer in New York. He signed with Ottawa in 2002 and did well, earning a permanent spot on the Sens' defensive unit in 2003 and notching 35 points and an impressive plus-29 rating — the 10th best in the league — last season.

But he was always overshadowed on the star-studded Senators, and quickly jumped at the chance to

play a featured role, and earn \$2.5 million a season, when the Caps came calling.

He's been earning his money so far this fall, logging nearly 27 minutes of ice time per game (fifth in the NHL) and leading the overachieving Caps with 12 assists heading into last night's game against Dallas.

In addition, he adds a smooth skating, puck-handling element the team has lacked in the new faster, wide-open NHL, a style that suits Pothier. Washington (9-9-6) hosts conference-leading Buffalo on Saturday and Pothier's old team on Dec. 6.

Perhaps more importantly, he fits in, a critical element on a team well known for relying on locker room chemistry to handle the ups and downs of the rebuilding process.

"There's nothing worse than a player feeling uncomfortable with the situation and then taking that out on the ice. Fortunately, he's just been terrific with us," goaltender Olie Kolzig said of Pothier.

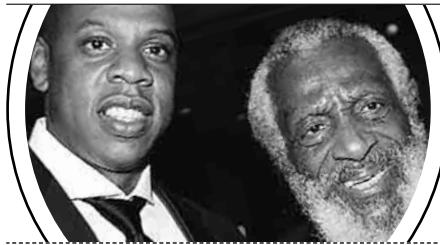
As for keeping up with the workload, the Caps' new defensive leader simply smiled and said, "We'll find out. I sure hope so."

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NIGHTLIFE AGENDA

No Retirement: Dick Gregory — right, with Jay-Z — and Paul Mooney perform at the Lincoln Theatre on Saturday. | **23**

Entertainment Weekend

'F---' Fudges It

New doc explores the pervasive, but still offensive, four letters

FILM | There's something sort of quaint about the ideas plumb in the documentary "F---," about the suggestion that anything could possibly be shocking anymore, particularly a frequently bandied-about four-letter word.

There's also something terribly familiar about the film's resemblance to another documentary that amassed celebrities and cultural experts to discuss a taboo topic: the more consistently entertaining "The Aristocrats," which traced the development of one of the oldest and raunchiest jokes in comedy.

Director Steve Anderson exhaustively explores the origins of the word and its many uses, from Lenny Bruce onstage to Dick Cheney on the Senate floor.

Comics like Billy Connolly, Drew Carey and Bill Maher can be hilarious when they get on a roll — then again, they should be, this is right in their wheelhouse — but too often "F---" feels like an endless parade



SHOCKING: In "F---," Bill Maher predictably argues that the F-bomb isn't a big deal.

of talking heads. Everyone falls into one of two camps: the cool kids who think the word is no big deal, and the conservatives who still find it

obscene (and are far less fun, and therefore far less funny).

Sam Donaldson explains in his trademark bombast that "The F-

word is a grand word," while Pat Boone thinks its use suggests crassness, and has instead turned his own last name into a cathartic expletive. Try shouting "Boone!" next time you stub your toe or knock over a glass of red wine. Doesn't feel quite so satisfying.

Porn stars such as Ron Jeremy and Tera Patrick get in on the act, as do musicians including Ice-T and Alanis Morissette, whose first hit, "You Oughta Know," famously included the line: "Are you thinking of me when you f--- her?"

"F---" also features what Anderson believes is the last filmed interview with Hunter S. Thompson before his 2005 suicide.

But then clips from myriad movies including "Sideways," "Old School" and "South Park: Bigger, Longer and Uncut" tend to upstage the documentary itself.

And like the act that constitutes one of the word's meanings, you can only do this for so long. By necessity, "F---" branches out into a discussion of decency, ranging from David Caruso's bare butt on "NYPD Blue" to Janet Jackson's Super Bowl wardrobe malfunction. At this point, the movie has lost its initial focus and instead becomes an indictment of the Federal Communications Commission — which feels as if it could be an entire documentary of its own.

CHRISTY LEMIRE (AP)



FOR COMPLETE WEEKEND LISTINGS SEE WASHINGTONPOST.COM/ENTERTAINMENT

Does a girl have to go into the city to get her dance on? I would love to find dance club(s) in the Gaithersburg/Rockville/Bethesda area. Where do all the party people go in this area?

To be honest, your best bet probably is to go into the city. However, Juste Lounge in Bethesda could make a solid substitute.

→ *Juste Lounge, 6821 Reed St., Bethesda; 202-393-0939, justelounge.com.*



Partying people at Juste Lounge, one of the only good dance spots in the 'burbs.

Can you recommend a fun reggae venue in D.C. or Baltimore? I used to go to 13th Floor on Friday nights (B'more) but it's hit or miss. I'm looking for dancing and drinks, not a restaurant.

Crossroads and Zanzibar are the big dogs, but there are a bunch of smaller spots that the real heads know about. For example, there's a new weekly event called Sleng Teng Lounge at Cafe Nema on Wednesdays.

→ *Crossroads, 4103 Baltimore Ave., Bladensburg, Md; 301-927-1056, crossroadsclub.com.*

→ *Zanzibar on the Waterfront, 700 Water St. SW; 202-554-9100, zanzibar-otw.com.*

→ *Cafe Nema, 1334 U St. NW; 202-667-3215, cafenema.com.*

The Going Out Gurus think you should get out more. Join the discussion Thursdays at 1 p.m. | washingtonpost.com/liveonline

Heroin Is Bad for You

'Candy' offers a realistic, but staid, picture of addiction

FILM | If there was any lingering doubt about Heath Ledger's versatility following "Brokeback Mountain," it should be dispelled here.

"Candy" allows him to get dark and dirty, and speak in his native Australian accent for a change, in an intensely believable tale of love and drug addiction.

Ledger and Abbie Cornish play Dan and Candy, a young married couple who do whatever they must



SMACKING OF PREDICTABILITY: Heath Ledger shows needles and the damage done.

to feed their heroin habit: beg, borrow, steal, even sell their bodies. The first time she turns a trick, of her own volition, he's OK with it. Australian stage director Neil Armfield takes that same unflinching, matter-of-fact approach the whole way; it's "Requiem for a Dream," stripped of all the audiovisual acrobatics.

Armfield, who co-wrote the script with Luke Davies based on Davies' novel, labels the film's three acts as "Heaven," "Earth" and "Hell." But since Dan and Candy are already junkies from the start, their fall doesn't feel quite so precipitous. And while the film itself goes through all the highs and lows required of any decent drug movie, it has no insight and offers nothing new about the nature of addiction.



CHRISTY LEMIRE (AP)

Weekend Entertainment



MOVE, PEOPLE, MESSIAH COMING THROUGH: Mary (Keisha Castle-Hughes) and Joseph (Oscar Isaac) return to Nazareth in style in the earnest "Nativity Story."

visits from the angel Gabriel (Alexander Siddig) that they're pregnant: Elizabeth had seemed too old and Mary had just become Joseph's wife in an arranged marriage to a man she barely knows and doesn't love (and had made a vow of chastity for their first year together).

While Mary is hiding out for a while with her cousin, King Herod (Hinds) has begun his paranoid search for the Messiah, based on an Old Testament prophecy. He instructs his troops to kill anyone who might be this child, but also hopes to find him through the Roman census, which forces citizens to return to their birthplaces.

Having returned to Nazareth obviously pregnant, Mary has been ostracized by nearly everyone — except Joseph, who believes her. She agrees to accompany him to his hometown of Bethlehem while on the verge of giving birth. And of course once they arrive in town, there's no room at the inn.

Schlepping through the desert at the same time are the three Magi (Nadim Sawalha, Eriq Ebouaney and Stefan Kalipha), who ostensibly were meant to provide a touch of comic relief. In their silken robes, the wise men — like everyone else in "The Nativity Story" — feel like participants in an elaborate high school production, one that looks authentic but has no soul.

CHRISTY LEMIRE (AP)



Plain 'Nativity' Scene

'The Nativity Story' preaches the gospel with little energy

FILM | Working from a thoroughly researched script by Mike Rich ("The Rookie," "Finding Forrester"), director Catherine Hardwicke ("Lords of Dogtown," "Thirteen") depicts the

birth of Christ in such a lifeless, suffocatingly earnest manner, you'd swear she made "The Nativity Story" specifically to be shown in Sunday school classes — or perhaps on the Hallmark Channel.

It is an innovative approach, though, to portray Mary (Keisha Castle-Hughes) and Joseph (Oscar Isaac) as a confused, newly married

couple trying to comprehend the fact that they're about to become parents of the Messiah. The gospels of Matthew and Luke address Christ's infancy, but little has been known, or shown, about mom and dad before that night in the manger. Most in the audience will walk away feeling that they've learned a thing or two.

Shohreh Aghdashloo, Ciaran Hinds, Shaun Toub and Hiam Abbas are among the eclectic international cast that's been amassed.

"Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb," Aghdashloo says in an example of the film's clunkily literal dialogue as Elizabeth, Mary's cousin.

Both are surprised to learn in

Freeman Saves 'Less'

'10 Items or Less' thrives on fine acting despite slight premise

FILM | What at first comes off like a prolonged drama-class exercise gradually develops into a mildly satisfying, out-of-left-field romp with "10 Items or Less," an unassuming tale about unlikely kinship sprouting between two strangers over the course of a day. Slight and wispy, it's a film that could only work with the gracious presence of someone like Morgan Freeman.

Freeman plays a movie star listed in the credits only as "Him," the character something of a riff on the actor himself. Considering a role as night manager at a low-end super-



OR MORE: Paz Vega and Morgan Freeman make a little movie seem bigger.

market in an independent film, Freeman's character heads out to a store in the Los Angeles suburb of Carson to research the part.

The sleepy, seedy market becomes a strange little bubble for a couple of hours as Freeman

studies the customers and the workers, particularly cashier Scarlet (Paz Vega), the spitfire who oversees the "10 Items or Less" checkout line.

Much of the film is stitched together from long, static sequences with few cuts, with Freeman and Vega persevering through excessive patches of dialogue. Still, writer-director Brad Silberling has made a sneaky little film, with a quiet, happy-sad, thought-provoking conclusion leaving viewers with something meaty to ponder.

"10 Items or Less" is a test case for alternative movie distribution. Two weeks after it debuts in theaters, the film will be available for online purchase or rental from Clickstarinc.com.

DAVID GERMAIN (AP)

Kidman's Payday Is Top Gun

FILM | Nicole Kidman is the queen of Hollywood when it comes to money. The Oscar winner, who earns as much as \$17 million per movie, tops the fifth annual list of highest-paid actresses released Wednesday by the Hollywood Reporter.

Kidman, 39, ranked second on last year's list behind Julia Roberts, who dropped off this year because she spent time with her twins rather than appear in films.

In second place, with \$15 million per movie, was Reese Witherspoon, 30, who won the best-actress Oscar this year for her performance



CHRIS JACKSON/GETTY
RICH SMILE: You'd be grinning, too, if you could nab Kidman-level cash.

in "Walk the Line."

Renee Zellweger, Drew Barrymore and Cameron Diaz placed third, fourth and fifth, respectively. They also get \$15 million for each film.

Rounding out the top 10 are Halle Berry (\$14 million), Charlize Theron (\$10 million), Angelina Jolie (\$10 million), Kirsten Dunst (\$8 million to \$10 million) and Jennifer Aniston (\$8 million). (AP)

Entertainment | Weekend

Nightlife Agenda

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO TONIGHT? BY FRITZ HAHN, RHOMNE ANDERSON AND DAVID MALITZ

FRIDAY

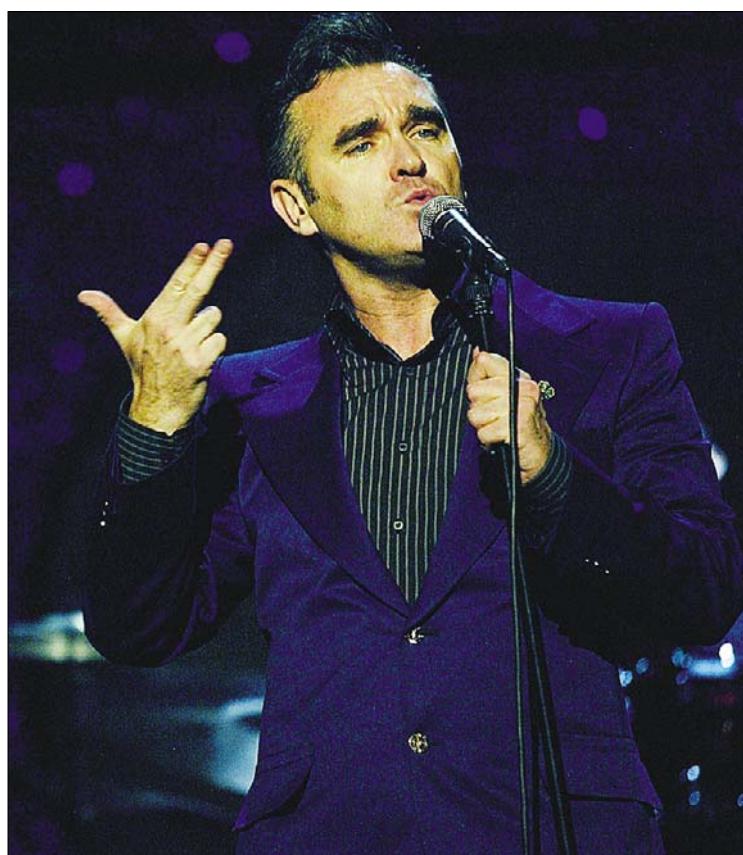
If that special someone is a fan of El Vez, the "Mexican Elvis," tickets to his show at the **BLACK CAT** are a perfect holiday gift: Few performers can match his magnetism — or his pompadour. Vez has hit the Cat annually for more than a decade and though he changes things up every year, one can expect lefty political moments, bizarre holiday songs and lots of jumpsuits. Real fans can have their photos taken with Vez — dressed as Santa — before he performs. Visit elvez.net to sign up. Space is limited.

SATURDAY

Chilly December is upon us, but it will be plenty sweaty inside **DC9** for Tease. It may seem like there are enough indie dance night DJs in our town that we don't need to import them from other cities, but that's what's happening tonight as John Redden from Philadelphia's Hands & Knees party comes down to man the decks. Expect to hear some current indie hits as well as some clubbier beats, a trend that should continue as the evening goes on and Ris Richards gets on the turntables. He'll drop smash-ups, Baltimore club and some of the best in local hip-hop.

If you want to hit up a dance night on Saturday but you're more of a sulker than a booty shaker, the **ROCK AND ROLL HOTEL** is the place for you. Strangeways is an all-night celebration of the Pope of Mope, so expect to hear all of your favorite Smiths and Morrissey songs, and maybe even some not-so-hot tracks from "Kill Uncle." Hey, it takes a lot of songs to fill six hours. For a long time, we thought evenings set to an all Smiths/Morrissey soundtrack were limited to the lonely bedrooms of 15-year old future English majors, but, apparently, we were wrong.

Not many comedy shows can double as history lessons, but tonight's concert featuring Paul Mooney and Dick Gregory at the **LINCOLN THEATRE** fits that bill. The two comics have roughly 70 years worth of combined experience to



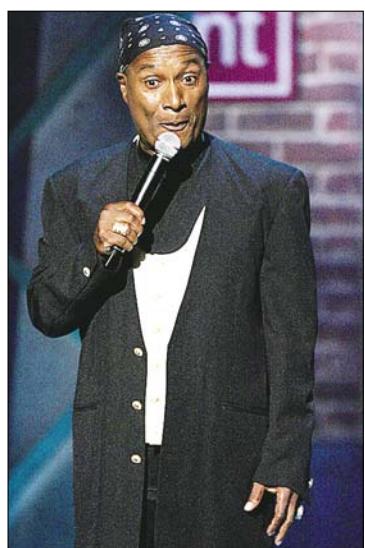
HOW SOON IS SATURDAY? Celebrity vegetarian Steven Patrick Morrissey emotes.

draw on and can tell tales of everyone from Richard Pryor to Malcolm X to Dave Chappelle. Mooney might be the more familiar name, due to his appearances on "Chappelle's Show," but he's also been a writer for "Saturday Night Live" and "In Living Color" in addition to being one of the more consistently hilarious storytellers around. He's a master of the form and can elicit laughs simply through his delivery. But don't worry, his material is plenty strong. Comic is just one of Gregory's titles, which also include best-selling author and former presi-

dential candidate. (His roughly 47,000 votes received in 1968 left him about 32 million short of what Richard Nixon received.) The show has some added relevance right now, as Mooney has been outspoken in the past week about eliminating a certain word that happened to serve as the title of Gregory's best-selling 1964 autobiography. So in addition to getting side-splitting comedy, you might actually learn something.

SUNDAY

Few people are more renowned in outsider jazz circles than Matthew Shipp. The versatile pianist always keeps listeners on their toes, which is one of the reasons he's so revered. Just when you have him situated comfortably in the avant-garde jazz corner, he'll do a drum 'n' bass collaboration or dabble in traditional jazz. Shipp's performances are always adventurous, but tonight's at **TWINS JAZZ** should be subdued as well, as he will perform solo on piano. This won't be your average recital, though, as Shipp's playing always pushes boundaries and, like his career, keeps you guessing what will come next.



Paul Mooney, aka "Negrodamus," at the BET Comedy Icon Awards in '05.

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Now Playing

A GOOD YEAR (PG-13, 118 minutes) "Under the Tuscan Sun of 'Sideways.'" That's one way to think of this unfathomable adaptation of Peter Mayle's novel. Unfathomable because what on paper looks like a sure-fire formula — France, romance, wine and Russell Crowe — falls as flat as a bottle of corked Bordeaux. (AH)

ABDUCTION: THE MEGUMI YOKOTA STORY (Unrated, 85 minutes) This film tells the story of a North Korean intelligence initiative by which Japanese nationals were kidnapped so spies could study them and master the art of masquerading as Japanese as they were dispatched to do mischief around the world. Megumi Yokota was 13 in 1977; she was walking home from school and simply vanished. It is a heartbreaking, gut-wrenching story of evil. (SH)

BABEL (R, 142 minutes) Director Alejandro González Iñárritu and writer Guillermo Arriaga tell multiple stories in multiple locations around the globe. Each tale is completely compelling on its own, and Iñárritu also proves superb at working with amateur actors. Yet as sophisticated a piece of filmmaking as it is, it seems hamstrung by the banality at its center and it never assembles into a satisfying whole. (SH)

BOBBY (R, 111 minutes) Emilio Estevez's ambitious, uneven and deeply affecting drama about the day Robert F. Kennedy was assassinated keeps the film's real subject on the margins of the story, instead conveying what the world looked and sounded and felt like the moment before it shattered. Even if it suffers from a few silly scenes, the movie gets more right than it does wrong. (AH)

BORAT: CULTURAL LEARNINGS OF AMERICA FOR MAKE BENEFIT GLORIOUS NATION OF KAZAKHSTAN (R, 89 minutes) Borat, played with seamless disingenuousness by Sacha Baron Cohen, has come to America to make a feature-length documentary for the people of his home country. As Borat cuts his wide and occasionally vicious swath, no petard goes unhoisted. It's a spectacle that delivers squeals, howls or at least low-level chuckles. The movie is a perfect combination of slapstick and satire. (AH)

CASINO ROYALE (PG-13, 140 minutes) Reinventing James Bond as a kind of Navy SEAL with an attitude problem, this movie turns out to be cracking good enter-



ful as she is dead when Doug finds her washed ashore after the terrorist bombing of a ferry under the Crescent City Bridge in New Orleans. Traveling back in time to retrace her steps could save the 543 lives lost on the ferry, identify the killer and, most important, bring Claire back among the living. The movie attempts to explain the "science" behind the movie's time-jumping, but in a drama that's contemporary and supposedly realistic, it comes off as cockamamie. (DT)

THE DEPARTED (R, 149 minutes) A deranged wit runs through this film, which finds Martin Scorsese up to his same old tricks of exploring an American ethnic subculture with frequent detours into carnage and mayhem. Scorsese plumbs the colorful depths of the Irish

Continued on page 26

WE'RE NOT WORTHY (OF AN OSCAR): "For Your Consideration" skewers awards-season buzz and hype with mixed results.

ainment, as well as a fresh start for the 21-picture franchise. Daniel Craig kicks major maximus as a Bond who'd never use a computer where a punch will do. He's lean and athletic and fast, and he is seemingly the first Bond to actually bleed. Half an hour too long and with too many villains we really can't place in the plot, the movie nevertheless proves you seldom go wrong if you make a movie that leaves you stirred, not shaken. (SH)

THE CAVE OF THE YELLOW DOG (Unrated, 93 minutes) This film is written and directed by Byambasuren Davaa, who co-directed a sleeper hit of 2003, "The Story of the Weeping Camel." Like "Camel," this film is set in the majestic outback of Mongolia. When an adorable little girl named Nansal finds a stray dog, she brings the pup home, only to have her father demand she let him go. Filmed with the same blend of intimacy, sweep, documentary and fiction that made "Camel" such a dazzling debut, this movie also bears poetic imagery and a sweet, affecting story. (AH)

COPYING BEETHOVEN (PG-13, 120 minutes) The central issue of this movie is the composer's declining years when Ludwig (Ed Harris) and Anna (Diane Kruger) became pals during the writing of that damned Ninth Symphony, the composer's last, upon which he labored for almost 10 years. As the irascible, extremely annoying old beast makes life hell, the good-hearted, virginal but musically sophisticated Anna keeps him on course, becoming more than a copyist but secretary, maid, social director and almost manager or agent. It's completely fictitious, of course. But it's nevertheless a fascinating peek into the culture of greatness, and the movie is beguiling. (SH)

DECK THE HALLS (PG, 95 minutes) A wimpy WASP (Matthew Broderick) has long been the Xmas czar of his annoy-

ingly picturesque town and feels he is entitled to govern Christmas; a lower-class usurper (Danny DeVito) seeks to take over the holiday and turn his house into an Armageddon of blazing lights. I literally did not count a single laugh in the whole aimless schlep. (SH)

DEJA VU (PG-13, 128 minutes) ATF agent Doug Carlin (Denzel Washington) goes back in time to unravel a crime. Claire Kuehner (Paula Patton) is as beauti-

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Weekend Entertainment

Now Playing

Continued from page 25

mob in Boston. Leonardo DiCaprio, Matt Damon and Jack Nicholson play three men who came up in Southie, only to end up on opposite sides of the law, or straddling both. The movie crackles right along, stopping only for Scorsese's signature bursts of explosive violence. Those brawls feel a bit rote, but what's different here is humor. (AH)

THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA (PG-13, 109 minutes) Meryl Streep plays Miranda Priestly, the driven, demanding editor in chief of Runway, the bible of New York fashion magazines. Miranda's latest hire is Andy Sachs (Anne Hathaway), the smart girl who eschews fashion. She wants to be a serious writer. Can Andy survive Miranda and win a recommendation that will get her in the door at any magazine in Manhattan? Streep makes it work. JENNIFER FREY

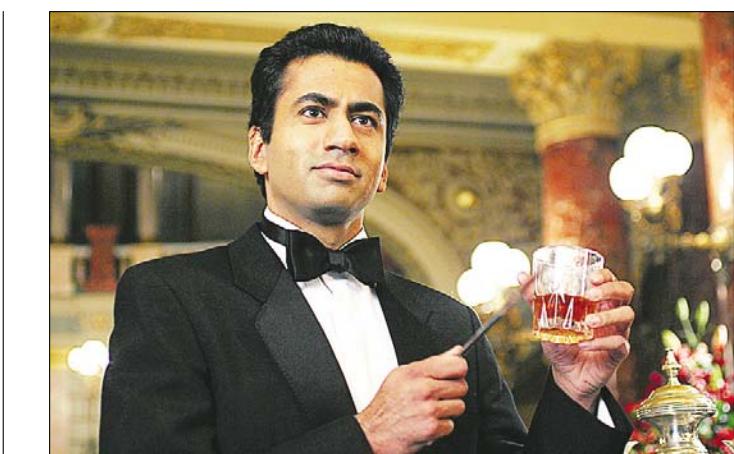
FAST FOOD NATION (R, 106 minutes) This film offers a thinly fictionalized structure affixed to some serious meat industry reportage originally by Eric Schlosser for a book of the same name. The film dramatizes Schlosser's findings, assigning his discoveries to personalities in and around hamburger culture. But the movie is weak and works far better as journal-

ism than as drama. (SH)

FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS (R, 132 minutes) The flag-raising on Iwo Jima was a real event that became a pseudo-event, the engine to a huge marketing machine with goals far more ambitious than the original participants could have imagined. And that process, exactly and resonantly, is the center of this heartbreakingly sobering film by Clint Eastwood. This film is passionate, honest, unflinching and gripping, and it pays respects. (SH)

FLICKA (PG, 94 minutes) Mary O'Hara's 1941 classic "My Friend Flicka" told the story of the dreamy younger son of a Wyoming rancher who found focus and love in his admiration for a mustang foal. In this edition, it's the younger daughter of a stern rancher, though the diagnosis is the same. There's no time for fibber-dee about "feelings"; it's much more interested in how people get the job done, and that involves grit, labor and discipline. (SH)

FLUSHED AWAY (PG, 87 minutes) This first computer-generated cartoon by Aardman Animations — best known for Nick Park's brilliant "Wallace & Gromit" franchise — does away with the clay but leaves the craft and emotion intact. When circumstances conspire to send Roddy, a pet mouse (Hugh Jackman), down the loo and into a sewer-level London populated by rats, toads, the odd frog and a charm-



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IT'S TAJ TIME

Wilder Without Van

WHAT DOES IT MEAN when a film sequel doesn't even feature the titular character in the movie? It means absolutely nothing, bro, so party on! "Van Wilder 2: The Rise of Taj" dispenses with the Ferris Bueller-like Van Wilder (played with appealing smarm by Ryan Reynolds in the 2002 original) to concentrate on his protégé, Taj Mahal Badalandabad (Kal Penn, aka Kumar the White Castle Fiend). A well-schooled Taj heads to Oxford University to teach uptight Brits what it means to hammer a beer bong. CHRISTOPHER PORTER (EXPRESS)

ing Greek chorus of slugs, he discovers what's really important in life. Shot through with cheeky wit and hilarious musical numbers by slugs. (AH)

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION (PG-13, 86 minutes) In this send-up of Hollywood, Christopher Guest has enlisted his usual repertory players as various art-

ists and apparatchiks working on a small film called "Home for Purim." When the indie production gets a little online buzz, suddenly everyone has visions of Oscar dancing in their heads. The movie is full of the observant comedy that made such Guest films as "Waiting for Guffman" and "A Mighty Wind" such cult favorites. But things take a nasty turn in the film's bilious third act, suggesting that Guest's deepest gift — his expansive humanism — stops at the studio gates. (AH)

THE FOUNTAIN (PG-13, 96 minutes) This is a futuristic romantic thriller with sci-fi and historical elements that blend into a trippy meditation on love, loss and the inextricable link between the two. Rachel Weisz plays two roles, Queen Isabella of Spain and Izzie, a contemporary woman who's going through an intense life passage; Hugh Jackman plays Izzie's husband, a driven physician; his 15th-century alter ego is one of Isabella's explorers. The film is a sprawling experiment in philosophical time travel and metaphysical noodling. And it's an earnest, magnificent wreck. (AH)

FUR: AN IMAGINARY PORTRAIT OF DIANE

ARBUS (R, 122 minutes) Loosely based on the superb 1984 biography by Patricia Bosworth, this film throws the text out and is, instead, an abstract, almost surreal meditation on the pivotal moment in Diane Arbus' life when she eschewed her bourgeois upbringing and took a leap of

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faith into art. Nicole Kidman is ramrod straight as Arbus, the prim wife and business partner of a commercial photographer. But then a mysterious man moves into the apartment upstairs (Robert Downey Jr.), and Diane discovers the subterranean world of freaks, geeks and misfits with whose portraits she would revolutionize photography. (AH)

HAPPY FEET (PG, 98 minutes) Anyone watching this computer-animated flick about an adorable tap-dancing, blue-eyed penguin named Mumble is going to, well, flip. Mumble (voice of Elijah Wood) realizes he can't sing, let alone come up with the special "heart song" that every able-bodied penguin needs to attract a mate. But the croaky fuzz ball sure can hoof. The movie, a mythic adventure in which Mumble is banished from his fellow waddlers before returning with newfound confidence, follows the familiar "Ugly Duckling" pattern. But its terrific songs are a warm cushion of welcome. (DT)

THE ILLUSIONIST (PG-13, 109 minutes) Edward Norton plays Eisenheim, an illusionist who has become the toast of aristocratic Vienna and is being watched by Chief Inspector Uhl (Paul Giamatti). The movie then backtracks to Eisenheim's beginnings as a poor boy, his friendship with a spirited young duchess and the downfall of their budding romance. The movie is a subtle, eerie augury of the cataclysm that awaits Austria, but it can't overcome a fatal inertness. (AH)

JACKASS: NUMBER TWO (R, 95 minutes) This sequel amounts to wall-to-wall bonehead behavior and it's hard to justify the grosser material, some of which borders on the pornographic. But these dudes understand the simple integrity of a slapstick gag. (DT)

THE LAST KING OF SCOTLAND (R, 121 minutes) This film concerns the flamboyant African despot Idi Amin, said to have been responsible for the murder of 300,000 of his fellow Ugandans during the '70s. The movie uses a fictional

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device to get up close and personal, but Amin, representing a human extreme, is so much more interesting than his witness, a young Scottish doctor of prosaic appetites and self-interests (James McAvoy). (SH)

LITTLE CHILDREN (R, 130 minutes) In this movie, the arrival of a convicted child molester in East Wyndham, Mass., triggers outrage throughout the community. But in this movie's reverse code, Ronnie the pedophile (Jackie Earle Haley) is practically one of the good guys. What links the well-to-do residents of the town is a deep-seated frustration. The happiness everyone seeks seems to be missing. The film is a hugely absorbing social drama that is, by turns, excruciating, sad and sardonic. (DT)

LITTLE MISS SUNSHINE (R, 101 minutes) Throw a quirky family in a broken-down, yellow VW bus en route from Albuquerque to Redondo Beach, Calif., so that 7-year-old Olive (Abigail Breslin) can compete for the dubious title of Little Miss Sunshine. What happens when the family actually makes it to the pageant is sad, sweet, enlightening and really, really funny. JENNIFER FREY

MAN OF THE YEAR (PG-13, 108 minutes) A talk-show host is asked why he won't run for president; the question spawns an Internet campaign urging him to run, and eventually he jumps into the race. For the first half-hour, Robin Williams does his trademark stand-up and the script skewers politicians. But if you're expecting a laugh fest, beware. (JF)

MARIE ANTOINETTE (PG-13, 118 minutes) Sofia Coppola has never been partial to narrative, but with this film she proves that she can tell a story. Kirsten Dunst plays the notorious French queen, whose engagement at age 14 to King Louis XVI was less a betrothal than a geopolitical merger. Much has been made of Coppola's frothy depiction of the Court of Versailles, but naysayers have completely missed the point of a film that is suffused with politics. Coppola brilliantly conjures the young queen's insular world, in which she was both isolated and claustrophobically scrutinized. (AH)

OPEN SEASON (PG, 79 minutes) Martin



Christian Bale, Hugh Jackman and Michael Caine, who play feuding magicians and their mentor, respectively. And there's the twisty plot that actually gives viewers a fighting chance to figure things out before the Big Reveal. If you see only one magic-at-the-turn-of-the-century movie this year, make it this one. (AH)

THE QUEEN (PG-13, 99 minutes) England's constitutional irony is the chilly but entertaining subplot of Stephen Frears' tragicomedy about the worst public relations crisis at Buckingham Palace since Henry VIII. The crisis begins in late August 1997, when Queen Elizabeth II (Helen Mirren) learns of Princess Diana's death. Mirren's finely calibrated performance reveals a complex woman coping with a bewildering world. (DT)

SANTA CLAUS 3: THE ESCAPE CLAUSE (G, 98 minutes) The third in a franchise that peaked in its first installment, this movie, which re-stars Tim Allen and 40 pounds of phony belly as the Christmas guy, has an almost criminal lack of invention or charm or even much story. (SH)

SAW III (R, 107 minutes) The gruesome manipulator Jigsaw (Tobin Bell) was last seen dying of brain cancer in "Saw II." But he captures a brain surgeon and forces her to operate on him with the tools in his hideout. A weird amalgam of disturbing gore and arty attempts to interweave Jigsaw's strange relation-

Continued on page 28

CLUB DREAD

Paradise Lost

IN 'TURISTAS,' A GROUP OF hot, sexy, smokin', vivacious, lovely, beautiful, gorgeous, profane, ribald backpackers get un-hot, un-sexy, un-smokin', un-vivacious, un-lovely, un-beautiful and un-gorgeous when their profane, ribald mouths are shut permanently in all sorts of disgusting ways after their remote jungle vacation in Brazil goes awry. But at least you know that these young, unfortunate adventurers will be scantily clad and totally buff, in life and in death. We should all be so fortunate. CHRISTOPHER PORTER (EXPRESS)

Lawrence voices Boog the bear, a grizzly who as a cub was adopted by kindhearted park ranger Beth (Debra Messing). When he crosses paths with an errant mule deer named Elliot (Ashton Kutcher), however, his cushy lifestyle ends, and he

is dropped back into the wild, three days before hunting season. With a slick visual style, the movie trots out tropes that recent animated classics have done with more wit and smarts. (AH)

THE PRESTIGE (PG, 129 minutes)

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Weekend Entertainment

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Continued from page 27

ship with his sullen, ex-junkie assistant with flashback sequences and running storylines from the two previous movies, this sequel is essentially another hack job. (DT)

SHUT UP & SING (R, 93 minutes) In this documentary by Barbara Kopple, you watch as wizard group manager Simon Renshaw masterminds a series of offensives meant to keep the Dixie Chicks alive after lead singer Natalie Maines, speaking before a London concert audience, announced to the attendees, "We're ashamed that the president of the United States is from Texas," just as the American ground action in Iraq was beginning in 2003. One of the excellent attributes of the film is that it lets the cards



JAY MAIDMENT/AFPI/GETTY IMAGES

HOLD ON, BABY, I SEE A SEA MONSTER! "Casino Royale" is James Bond at his finest.

fall where they may and really doesn't try to spin the Chicks themselves. (SH)

STRANGER THAN FICTION (PG-13, 105 minutes) Harold Crick (Will Ferrell) keeps hearing a voice in his head. It belongs to Kay Eiffel (Emma Thompson), an English writer who just happens to be writing a

novel about a character named Harold Crick, who she plans to kill off. We nearly lick our lips, anticipating the intriguing resolutions ahead. Unfortunately, the filmmakers seem to have their minds on some other movie. (DT)

TALLADEGA NIGHTS: THE BALLAD

OF RICKY BOBBY (PG-13, 105 minutes) Will Ferrell's NASCAR sendup doesn't do much more than go for the quick guffaw from stereotypical red-neck jokes. (TW)

TENACIOUS D IN THE PICK OF DESTINY (R, 93 minutes) Jack Black and Kyle Gass hit the big screen with mixed success, depending on the age, gender and degree of inebriation of the filmgoer. The movie is nominally about how the men's band, Tenacious D, got started and found fame and fortune. It's really an excuse for extended scatological gags, in-joke cameos and self-referential songs that both lampoon and celebrate rock at its most ridiculously grandiose. (AH)

REVIEWS BY THE WASHINGTON POST'S ANN HORNADAY, STEPHEN HUNTER, MICHAEL O'SULLIVAN, DESSON THOMSON AND TERESA WILTZ. FOR MORE CAPSULES AND FULL REVIEWS OF THESE AND OTHER FILMS, SEE WASHINGTONPOST.COM/ENTERTAINMENT

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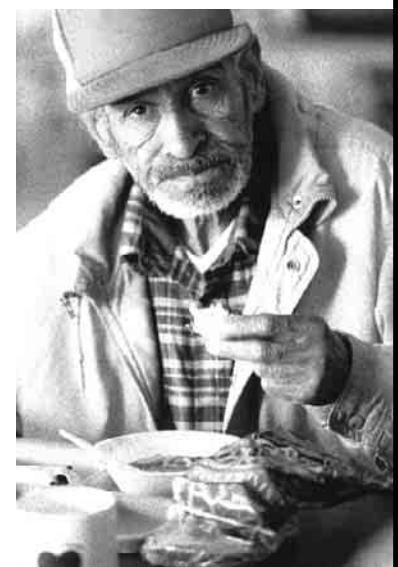
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Television



IT'S JUST LIKE JAZZ, MAN: "The Office" relies on improvisation from its actors.

Be Funny On the Fly

The actor-writers on 'The Office' know spontaneous comedy

TV | "The Office" is the rare scripted TV show in which the line between writing and performing is, by design, almost nonexistent. It's an improv-style approach that could yield important lessons for those puzzled by the identity crisis and creative drift that seem to be afflicting small-screen comedy.

A workplace mockumentary set in the Scranton, Pa., branch of fictional paper company Dunder-Mifflin Inc., "The Office" has had some of its most acclaimed episodes written by regular or recurring cast members, some of whom are barely out of college.

Mindy Kaling, who plays the show's "Indian Valley Girl," Kelly Kapoor, drew on her cultural heritage to write a script this season that had the Dunder-Mifflin crew awkwardly celebrating the Hindu holiday Diwali.

Another "Office" 20-something, B.J. Novak, who plays the

laconic young temp, Ryan, is a stand-up comic with a Harvard education and writing credits on five episodes.

Veteran comedy writer Paul Lieberstein became a performer entirely by accident, developing the bit part of the soft-spoken human resources manager, Toby, into a wry portrait of a passive-aggressive player in corporate politics.

Even series star Steve Carell, who plays the endlessly embarrassing boss, Michael Scott, has pitched in, writing last season's finale episode.

Executive producer Greg Daniels, formerly a writer-producer on "The Simpsons" and "King of the Hill," said the double duty is intentional. He has clauses inserted in the writers' contracts to cover whatever acting chores arise.

"Partly, I was just imitating things I loved, like 'Monty Python' or 'Fawlty Towers,' where the writers and performers are the same people," Daniels said. "The actors I hired, I tried to have them all have improvisational backgrounds."

SCOTT COLLINS (LOS ANGELES TIMES)

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AMC HOFFMANN CENTER 22
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NATIONAL LAMPOON'S VAN WILDER: THE RISE OF THE TAJ (R) ✓ (11:45 @ \$5), 2:30, 5:15, 7:45, 10:20, 12:55
 TURISTAS (R) ✓ (11:20 @ \$5), 5:00, 4:40, 7:25, 9:55, 12:30
 DECK THE HALLS (PG) ✓ (11:45 @ \$5), 12:45, 2:10, 3:10, 4:50, 5:45, 7:15, 9:50, 12:20
 DEJA VU (PG13) ✓ (10:00, 10:45 @ \$5), 1:00, 1:45, 4:05, 4:45, 7:10, 8:00, 10:00, 11:00, 12:55
 THE FOUNTAIN (PG13) ✓ (10:35 @ \$5), 1:25, 4:25, 6:55, 9:45, 12:20
 TENACIOUS D IN THE PICK OF DESTINY (R) ✓ 12:05 AM
 CASINO ROYALE (PG13) (10:30 @ \$5), 12:30, 2:00, 4:15, 5:15, 7:30, 8:30, 11:00, 12:00
 HAPPY FEET (PG) (10:15, 11:15 @ \$5), 1:15, 2:15, 3:55, 5:00, 6:45, 7:45, 8:30, 10:30, 12:15
 HAPPY FEET (PG) ✓ (10:15 @ \$5), 1:15, 3:55, 6:45, 9:30, 12:15
 STRANGER THAN FICTION (PG13) (11:00 @ \$5), 1:40, 4:55, 7:55, 10:40
 BORAT (R) (11:55 @ \$5), 2:35, 5:10, 7:35, 8:35, 10:10, 11:10, 12:25
 FLUSHED AWAY (PG) (10:50 @ \$5), 1:25, 4:05, 6:30, 8:50
 THE SANTA CLAUSE 3: THE ESCAPE CLAUSE (G) 12:05, 2:35, 5:00, 7:25, 9:45
 THE NATIVITY STORY (PG) ✓ (11:30 @ \$5), 2:15, 5:00, 7:30, 10:15, 12:45
 BOBBY (R) ✓ (10:10 @ \$5), 1:10, 4:10, 7:20, 10:05
 FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION (PG13) ✓ (11:05 @ \$5), 1:20, 3:35, 5:55, 8:10, 10:25
 THE DEPARTED (R) (10:05 @ \$5), 1:30, 4:55, 8:25, 11:45
AMC SELECT
 THE NATIVITY STORY (PG) ✓ (11:30 @ \$5), 2:15, 5:00, 7:30, 10:15, 12:45
 BOBBY (R) ✓ (10:10 @ \$5), 1:10, 4:10, 7:20, 10:05
 FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION (PG13) ✓ (11:05 @ \$5), 1:20, 3:35, 5:55, 8:10, 10:25
 THE QUEEN (PG13) (10:20 @ \$5), 1:05, 3:45, 6:35, 9:15

AMC SPRINGFIELD MALL 10
 Loisdale and Franconia Road
 703-971-3991
 NATIONAL LAMPOON'S VAN WILDER: THE RISE OF THE TAJ (R) ✓ 12:50, 3:10, 5:30, 7:45, 10:10
 TURISTAS (R) ✓ 1:30, 4:20, 7:30, 10:00
 DECK THE HALLS (PG) ✓ 1:20, 4:20, 7:10, 9:40
 DEJA VU (PG13) ✓ 1:15, 4:20, 7:30, 10:20
 TENACIOUS D IN THE PICK OF DESTINY (R) ✓ 9:50 PM
 CASINO ROYALE (PG13) 12:30, 3:45, 7:00, 10:10
 HAPPY FEET (PG) 1:30, 4:40, 7:40, 10:15
 BORAT (R) 1:00, 3:20, 5:40, 8:00, 10:20
 FLUSHED AWAY (PG) 12:40, 3:00, 5:10, 7:20
 THE SANTA CLAUSE 3: THE ESCAPE CLAUSE (G) 1:15, 4:10, 7:00, 9:30
AMC SELECT
 THE NATIVITY STORY (PG) ✓ 1:00, 4:10, 7:15, 9:55
AMC MAZZA GALLERIE
 Jenifer and Wisconsin
 202-537-9553
 DECK THE HALLS (PG) ✓ 12:50, 3:00, 5:15, 7:30, 9:55
 DEJA VU (PG13) ✓ 1:35, 4:20, 7:20, 10:10
 TENACIOUS D IN THE PICK OF DESTINY (R) ✓ 4:50, 10:20
 CASINO ROYALE (PG13) 12:00, 3:20, 6:30, 9:45
 HAPPY FEET (PG) 12:30, 3:00, 5:30, 8:00, 10:30
 BORAT (R) 1:10, 3:10, 5:20, 7:25, 9:30
 BORAT (R) ✓ 1:20, 3:10, 5:20, 7:25, 9:30
 FLUSHED AWAY (PG) 12:20, 2:20, 4:30
 THE DEPARTED (R) 6:40, 9:50
AMC SELECT
 BABEL (R) 1:45, 7:05
LOEWS GEORGETOWN 14
 3111 K Street, N.W.
 202-342-6441
 NATIONAL LAMPOON'S VAN WILDER: THE RISE OF THE TAJ (R) ✓ 12:05, 2:15, 4:30, 7:00, 9:20
 TURISTAS (R) ✓ 1:20, 2:50, 5:15, 7:40, 10:30
 DEJA VU (PG13) ✓ 1:15, 4:15, 7:15, 10:25
 THE FOUNTAIN (PG13) ✓ 1:20, 3:15, 4:40, 8:15, 10:50
 TENACIOUS D IN THE PICK OF DESTINY (R) ✓ 12:10 PM, 10:45 PM
 CASINO ROYALE (PG13) 12:00, 1:00, 3:10, 4:10, 6:30, 7:30, 10:00, 11:00
 HAPPY FEET (PG) 2:45, 5:25, 8:05
 STRANGER THAN FICTION (PG13) 12:00, 2:30, 5:05, 7:50, 10:35
 BORAT (R) 1:20, 3:30, 5:45, 8:00, 10:15
AMC SELECT
 THE NATIVITY STORY (PG) ✓ 2:00, 4:20, 6:50, 9:15
 BOBBY (R) ✓ 1:55, 4:30, 7:45, 10:40
 FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION (PG13) 12:30, 2:55, 5:10, 7:25, 9:40
 BABEL (R) 12:35, 3:50, 7:05, 10:20
 THE QUEEN (PG13) 12:15, 2:35, 5:00, 7:35, 10:05
AMC SELECT
 LOEWS LEXINGTON PARK 6
 21882 FDR Boulevard
 301-862-5000
 DECK THE HALLS (PG) 2:45, 5:30, 8:00, 10:15
 DEJA VU (PG13) 2:00, 5:00, 7:45, 10:30
 CASINO ROYALE (PG13) 1:30, 4:30, 7:30, 10:45
 HAPPY FEET (PG) 1:45, 4:15, 7:00, 9:30
 THE SANTA CLAUSE 3: THE ESCAPE CLAUSE (G) 2:30, 5:15, 8:10, 10:35
AMC SELECT
 THE NATIVITY STORY (PG) 2:15, 4:45, 7:15, 9:45

AMC POTOMAC MILLS 18
 2700 Potomac Mills Circle, Ste 886
 703-998-4262

NATIONAL LAMPOON'S VAN WILDER: THE RISE OF THE TAJ (R) ✓ (11:55 @ \$5), 2:30, 4:45, 7:10, 9:30
 TURISTAS (R) ✓ (11:20 @ \$5), 2:20, 4:40, 7:05, 9:25
 DECK THE HALLS (PG) ✓ (10:40, 11:20 @ \$5), 1:30, 2:25, 4:20, 5:15, 7:20, 9:55
 DEJA VU (PG13) ✓ (10:00, 10:45 @ \$5), 1:00, 1:45, 4:05, 4:45, 7:10, 8:00, 10:20, 11:00
 THE FOUNTAIN (PG13) ✓ (12:30, 3:00, 5:20, 7:45, 10:10)
 TENACIOUS D IN THE PICK OF DESTINY (R) ✓ 3:25, 5:40, 8:00, 10:40
 CASINO ROYALE (PG13) (11:15 @ \$5), 12:00, 2:30, 3:15, 6:00, 6:45, 7:15, 9:25
 HAPPY FEET (PG) (10:30, 11:00 @ \$5), 1:00, 1:45, 3:45, 4:30, 6:30, 7:15, 9:15, 10:00
 STRANGER THAN FICTION (PG13) (11:10 @ \$5), 2:25, 5:15, 8:10, 11:00
 BOBBY (R) ✓ (10:15 @ \$5), 1:15, 3:55, 6:45, 9:30, 12:15
 STRANGER THAN FICTION (PG13) (11:00 @ \$5), 1:40, 4:55, 7:55, 10:40
 BORAT (R) (11:55 @ \$5), 2:35, 5:10, 7:35, 8:35, 10:10, 11:10, 12:25
 FLUSHED AWAY (PG) (10:50 @ \$5), 1:25, 4:05, 6:30, 8:50
 THE SANTA CLAUSE 3: THE ESCAPE CLAUSE (G) 12:05, 2:35, 5:00, 7:25, 9:45
AMC SELECT
 THE NATIVITY STORY (PG) ✓ (10:35 @ \$5), 2:00, 4:10, 7:00, 9:35
 BOBBY (R) ✓ (11:05 @ \$5), 1:55, 4:35, 7:30, 10:35
 FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION (PG13) 12:50, 3:10, 5:35, 7:50, 10:05
 BABEL (R) 9:00 PM

AMC COLUMBIA MALL 14
 10300 Patuxent Parkway
 410-423-0520

NATIONAL LAMPOON'S VAN WILDER: THE RISE OF THE TAJ (R) ✓ 1:15 @ \$5, 1:35, 4:05, 6:25, 8:45, 11:05
 TURISTAS (R) 1:25, 3:20, 5:20, 8:15, 10:40
 DECK THE HALLS (PG) (11:35 @ \$5), 1:55, 4:20, 6:45, 9:15
 DEJA VU (PG13) (11:10 @ \$5), 12:35, 2:05, 3:40, 5:00, 6:35, 7:55, 9:30, 10:50
 DEJA VU (PG13) 12:35, 3:40, 5:35, 7:30, 9:30
 THE FOUNTAIN (PG13) 12:10, 2:30, 4:50, 7:15, 9:35
 TENACIOUS D IN THE PICK OF DESTINY (R) 10:15 PM
 CASINO ROYALE (PG13) 12:45, 4:15, 7:45, 11:00
 HAPPY FEET (PG) (11:05 @ \$5), 1:45, 4:25, 7:05, 9:45
 STRANGER THAN FICTION (PG13) (11:00 @ \$5), 1:30, 4:10, 7:00, 9:50
 BORAT (R) (11:25 @ \$5), 1:40, 3:55, 6:15, 8:35, 10:55
 FLUSHED AWAY (PG) (10:55 @ \$5), 1:00, 3:25, 5:40, 8:05
 THE SANTA CLAUSE 3: THE ESCAPE CLAUSE (G) 12:25, 2:55, 5:15, 7:35
AMC SELECT
 THE NATIVITY STORY (PG) (11:50 @ \$5), 2:25, 4:55, 7:25, 9:55
 BABEL (R) 12:40, 3:30, 6:20, 9:10
 BABEL (R) 10:00 PM

AMC RIVERTOWNE 12
 Exit 4A I-95, 1/2 mi. on Oxon Hill Rd.
 703-998-44ACM

NATIONAL LAMPOON'S VAN WILDER: THE RISE OF THE TAJ (R) ✓ 5:40, 8:00, 10:25
 TURISTAS (R) ✓ 5:45, 8:10, 10:40
 DECK THE HALLS (PG) ✓ 5:45, 8:05, 10:35
 DEJA VU (PG13) ✓ 4:40, 7:00, 8:00, 10:20
 CASINO ROYALE (PG13) 6:30, 10:00
 HAPPY FEET (PG) 4:45, 7:45, 10:30
 FLUSHED AWAY (PG) 5:40, 8:10, 10:35
 THE SANTA CLAUSE 3: THE ESCAPE CLAUSE (G) 4:15, 7:15, 9:50
 SAW III (R) 4:40, 7:30, 10:15
AMC SELECT
 THE NATIVITY STORY (PG) ✓ 4:30, 7:20, 10:05
 BOBBY (R) ✓ 4:20, 7:00, 10:10

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HAPPY FEET (PG)
 (1) 12:15, 2:35, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00
 DECK THE HALLS (PG)
 (1) 12:30, 2:50, 5:00, 7:30, 10:20
 TURISTAS (R)
 (1) 12:30, 2:45, 5:10, 7:20, 10:20
 CASINO ROYALE (PG-13)
 (1) 12:00, 3:15, 6:30, 9:45
 DEJA VU (PG-13)
 (1) 1:00, 4:00, 7:10, 10:00

LAUREL CINEMA 6
 LAUREL SHOPPING CENTER RT. 1
 301-604-2885
 SHOWS BEFORE 6 PM \$5.00
 TURISTAS (R) 4:15, 7:25, 9:35
 DEJA VU (PG-13) 4:25, 7:10, 9:45
 HAPPY FEET (PG) 4:45, 7:15, 9:30
 CASINO ROYALE (PG-13) 4:10, 7:00, 9:40

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 ONE NIGHT WITH THE KING (PG)
 Special group & private screenings only
 call 301-316-1030

HAPPY FEET (PG)
 (1) 12:20, 2:50, 5:20, 7:50, 10:30
 VAN WILDER 2: THE RISE OF TAJ (R)
 (1) 12:45, 3:05, 5:30, 8:05, 10:35
 BOBBY (R)
 (1) 2:45, 7:20, 9:55
 LITTLE CHILDREN (R)
 (2) 10:00, 5:05, 8:10
 THE FOUNTAIN (PG-13)
 (2) 1:15, 4:35, 7:20, 9:45

DISTRICT
 P&G WESTFIELD MONTGOMERY
 7101 Democracy Blvd. Beth. 301-767-9555
 BARGAIN MATINEES BEFORE 6 PM!
 HAPPY FEET (PG)
 (2) 3:00, 5:00, 7:25, 9:40
 FLUSHED AWAY (PG)
 (2) 4:45, 6:45, 8:10, 10:35
 *VAN WILDER 2:
 THE RISE OF TAJ (R)
 (2) 12:30, 2:25, 5:50, 8:15, 10:40
 *DEJA VU (PG-13):
 (1) 11:00, 3:00, 5:00, 7:00, 9:00, 11:00
 MARLOW 6 THEATRES
 Temple Hills, Md. 301-316-1031
 ONE NIGHT WITH THE KING (PG)
 Special group & private screenings only
 call 301-316-1030

HAPPY FEET (PG)
 (1) 12:20, 2:20, 4:20, 6:20, 8:20, 10:20
 TURISTAS GO HOME (R)
 (1) 10:00, 3:00, 5:00, 7:00, 9:00, 11:00
 DEJA VU (PG-13)
 (1) 12:10, 2:40, 5:10, 7:40, 10:10
 CASINO ROYALE (PG-13)
 (1) 12:00, 2:45, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00
 FLUSHED AWAY (PG) (12) 1:15, 2:10, 4:10, 6:15, 8:30, 10:45
 THE SANTA CLAUSE 3:
 THE ESCAPE CLAUSE (G) 1:15, 2:15, 4:45, 7:15, 9:30
 THE FOUNTAIN (PG-13) (1) 1:15, 2:15, 4:45, 7:15, 9:30
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 all positions—apply at theatre

P&G OLD GREENBELT
 301-474-9744
 At intersection of Crescent & Southway
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 THE QUEEN (PG-13)
 (1) 15:00 @ \$5.00, 7:30, 9:45

P&G WHEATON 11
 Westfield Wheaton Mall
 301-949-9201
 (*) denotes no passes
 All shows before 6pm \$5.50

TURISTAS (R) (1) 5:40, 7:50, 10:10
 VAN WILDER 2: THE RISE OF TAJ (R)
 (1) 5:20, 7:45, 10:05
 CANDY (R)
 (1) 11:10, 1:35, 4:10, 7:25, 9:55
 FOUR LETTER FILM (F***) (NR)
 (4) 3:00, 10:00
 THE CAVE OF THE YELLOW DOG (NR)
 (1) 11:55, 2:10, 7:10, 9:20
 FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION (PG-13)
 (1) 11:55, 2:20, 4:25, 5:50, 7:20, 9:45
 DECK THE HALLS (PG)
 (1) 0:35, 7:40, 9:40
 TENACIOUS D (R) 9:25
 THE QUEEN (PG-13)
 (1) 7:30, 9:30
 BOBBY (R) (1) 4:45, 7:25, 9:45
 DEJA VU (PG-13) (1) 4:10, 7:10, 9:55
 THE LAST KING OF SCOTLAND (R)
 (1) 11:00, 2:30, 4:15, 7:15, 9:30
 THE QUEEN (PG-13)
 (1) 11:05, 1:30, 4:05, 7:05, 9:40
 LET'S GO TO PRISON (R)
 (1) 2:45, 6:25, 9:45
 SHUT UP & SING (R)
 (1) 12:00, 2:45, 4:20, 7:30, 9:50
 THE FOUNTAIN (PG-13)
 (1) 0:40, 2:00, 9:50
 BORAT (R) (1) 5:30, 7:35, 9:35
 THE SANTA CLAUSE 3: THE ESCAPE CLAUSE (G) 5:10, 7:15

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 BARGAIN MATINEES BEFORE 6 PM! ✓
 10 ITEMS OR LESS (R)
 (1) 11:45, 1:45, 3:45, 5:45, 7:45, 9:45
 CANDY (R)
 (1) 11:10, 1:35, 4:10, 7:25, 9:55
 FOUR LETTER FILM (F***) (NR)
 (4) 3:00, 10:00
 THE CAVE OF THE YELLOW DOG (NR)
 (1) 11:55, 2:10, 7:10, 9:20
 FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION (PG-13)
 (1) 11:55, 2:20, 4:25, 5:50, 7:20, 9:45
 DECK THE HALLS (PG)
 (1) 0:35, 7:40, 9:40
 TENACIOUS D (R) 9:25
 THE QUEEN (PG-13)
 (1) 7:30, 9:30
 BOBBY (R) (1) 4:45, 7:25, 9:45
 DEJA VU (PG-13) (1) 4:10, 7:10, 9:55
 THE LAST KING OF SCOTLAND (R)
 (1

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Min. 3 yrs of progressive secretarial exper. Must have excellent office mgmt. & comm. (verbal & written) skills. Ability to work independently with min supervision & within established deadlines. Must be proficient in Word & Excel. 2 blocks from Takoma Metro Station. Salary negotiable. Benefits. EOE. Call 202-882-7648.

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Save The Bay! Learn the basics of political organizing and fundraising while working with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation! Passion for environmental issues and good communication skills are a must. Hours M-F 1:30-10:00 p.m. Earn 395-480/wk + bonus Call Citizens Campaigns at 202-895-0420 X113

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CHILD CARE ASST.

Asst/teachers, Child Care sub. referral service. Infants-5 yrs. 202-479-6700 after 10a.

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DC Firm seeks exp person to provide Concierge/Front Desk duties. Must possess exc commun/comp skills, proficient in Word and Excel. Min of 3 yrs exp req'd as Concierge. Call for interview 202-543-6080.

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Cook: dependable & industrious. Line cook+cold station cook needed full time. German exp a+. Good pay and benefits. Call Alex at 202-333-7600

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Value Village project has immed FT positions for Customer Service Reps. Qualified candidates must possess excel telephone manner and people skills. Must enjoy working w/ the public. Friendly, motivated individuals Apply in person at 10811 Tucker St, Beltsville MD, 20705.

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JOBS

DRIVER — BUS DRIVER. P/T, 20-30/hr/wk, up to \$16/hr. AM/PM school run CDL w/B/C Class and P end. Call 202-636-9203

DRIVER — Earn \$600-800/week FT, \$9-14/hr PT. Driving for TakeOut Taxi, the area's largest restaurant delivery service. Own vehicle req'd. Call: 301-571-0111.

Driver

PARKING ATTENDANT

Overnight shifts, MD. Must drive stick. Call 301-986-9271.

DRIVER

ROUTE MONITOR for refuse co. Must be able to read map, be bilingual & have knowl. of VA, & valid driver's lic. Great salary & co. benefits. Call 301-773-2069

Driver

Value Village project has immed FT positions for Drivers. Must be at least 21 w/clean driving record. Knowledge of Washington & Baltimore area. ADC Maps helpful, excellent pay & benefits. Dependable, motivated people interested in fast paced job. Apply in person with MVR at 10811 Tucker St, Beltsville MD, 20705. Mon-Fri 8a-4p

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DRIVERS

Upscale Thrift Store looking for experienced drivers. No CDL License required. Immediate positions available in Northern VA & MD. Apply at any of our 3 locations: 2956 Gallows Rd. Falls Church, VA. 703-992-6560; 10121 New Hampshire Ave, Silver Spring, MD 301-431-7450; or 12211 Viers Mills Rd, Wheaton, MD 301-962-0600.

Education

Preschool teacher wanted
Fax resume to 703-642-5539

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Needed for new salon in Oxon Hill, MD. Call 240-417-0584 or 240-882-9418

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FT/PT, Frnt Desk, ngt Audit. Apply in person: 6633 Arlington Blvd, Falls Church.

JANITOR—FT, must be exp'd in floor care & cleaning, own transportation. Willing to work hard for good pay. Must pass criminal background check & drug screening. Call 301-932-8405

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Medical - PHYSICAL THERAPIST, OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST & SPEECH LANG. PATHOLOGIST wanted. PT/FT. Start immediately in MD/VA. Top pay/benefits plus incentives. Call EPSI 202-785-8367

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Busy pediatric practice. Knowledge of Medi-Soft. Must have front desk experience. No weekends. Fax resume to 202-244-2192.

JOBS

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\$8.50/hr, Bike delivery. Apply in person M-F 8a-11a. 1323 Rhode Island Ave NW DC.

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Nursing

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Fax: 866-589-7312

E-Mail: recruitment.cs@accesswww.com

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VA11-1373

EOE

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- Three yrs contract mgmt exp preferred for security contract in DC metro area.
- Exp managing min 50 empl
- AA/AS required
- Prefer SPO, but must have ability to be armed cert. in DC.
- Sched M-F Tues-Sat, 2:30pm to 11pm

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VA11-1373

EOE

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WALDR—Huge SFH to shr. BRs avail. \$600-\$800/mo. 202-246-4233 or 202-577-3097

WHITE FLINT/N. BETHESDA—BR in a gorgeous neat hse. Female preferred. \$475. 301-792-0309 or 301-931-3310

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ADELPHI—2BR 1BA. Owner/Agent. \$175,000 plus \$5,000 Closing Help. 240-672-7080

ALEX—Spacious Penthouse, 2br,2ba,2 spc garg. \$270K seller pays ALL closing Open Hse 12/2 frm 1-3p, 5911 Edsall Rd PH14 call for details 202-345-7955

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ARL

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Unit 534 at 1309 N. Ode St. offers treetop vistas from this updated penthouse. Priced to sell today. Offered by Sharon Hayman, Long & Foster 703-942-2955

Foster 703-967-4391

Unit 134 at 1301 N. Ode St. is penthouse perfection and more! Call Scott Phillips, Coldwell Banker Residential, 703-981-4969

LAKERIDGE—RENT W/OPT TO BUY. Cis to VRE. 3, 4 & 5 BR homes. 1500+/mo. Troubled credit ok.

Surrounding areas also. Call Ryan Lynch, Coldwell

Banker Residential, 703-981-4969

LANHAM—OPEN HOUSE/AUCTION SAT/SUN 12-5

—Spacious, 4BR, 2 1/2BA split foyer on a large corner lot. Ice driveway, freshly painted, new kite apples, new carpet, pfl. Closing help, buyer agent welcome. 6017 Harland St. Call 866-444-4402.

LaNham \$360,000

Chevy Chase-\$1.6M—Beaut renov home w/ 4BR & 4FBA & 1 1/2BA. Great rm w/spect view. Mstr ste, Lrg fin bsmt w/fpl, LR w/fpl, Eat in gour kit w/ SS appl, Au pair ste w/pvt entr. Quiet comm w/ many amenities! Best Elem school in Mont Cnty.

5517 Uppington St. Open Sat & Sun, 1-4. Richard Feldman, 202-557-0059

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JUST REDUCED! Nr Quantico, Updt split foyer,

4BR, 2BA, FR w/fplc, grg, hot tub, corner lot, 1800ft Wilmer Porter Ct. View Properties 703-877-6921

FT WASH/TANTILLON N. \$749,250/Offer—6BR,

3.5BA all brick Colonial, fin bsmt, heated pool, spa, deck, jacuzzi & more. Barry 301-203-3402. Re/Max

FT. WASHINGTON—Split foyer, 4BR, new kitchen, baths, roof & carpet. \$329,990.

Mansfield Realtors, 301-346-3649

HARRISONBURG—Business for sale w/National name. Super visible location on rte 33. Call Cara Lee

@ Lee & Associates: 540-433-7222 or 800-351-6223

HYATTSVILLE—3BR, 2BA SFH w/lovely bsmt apt, 1 ofc. Nr PG Metro. Pvt entr. \$335,000. 301-209-1028

LAKERIDGE—Buy home with \$500 or less. Closing costs paid! 3, 4, 5 BR. Surrounding areas also. Troubled credit ok. 100s to choose from. Call Scott Phillips, Coldwell Banker

LAKERIDGE—RENT W/OPT TO BUY. Cis to VRE. 3, 4 & 5 BR homes. 1500+/mo. Troubled credit ok.

Surrounding areas also. Call Ryan Lynch, Coldwell

Banker Residential, 703-981-4969

LANHAM—OPEN HOUSE/AUCTION SAT/SUN 12-5

—Spacious, 4BR, 2 1/2BA split foyer on a large corner lot. Ice driveway, freshly painted, new kite apples, new carpet, pfl. Closing help, buyer agent welcome. 6017 Harland St. Call 866-444-4402.

LaNham \$360,000

\$10,000 Closing Cost Help!

OPEN SAT 12/02 1 to 4PM SFH Split Foyer, 3 BR, 2BA, HW floors, New Kitchen. Fenced yard w/deck. Affordable and easy to own. Stop by the OPEN HOUSE at 6409 Brays St or call for appt. Art Eustace@240-793-4554 (cell).

CENTURY 21 Village Realty
301-963-7800 ext 111

LAUREL—Large 3 bdrrms/2 1/2 bath townhome.

Saturday, December 1 2001 - 1:00PM - 3:00PM

14909 Belle Ami Drive, #75.

Rene Shorter, Re/Max Allegiance (301) 577-8080

LOCUST GROVE NEW TOWNHOMES \$239,900

4BR, 3-1/2BA. 3 fin. 1vs, 1 car gar, 2700 sq ft.

Dir. Rte 3W, 15 mi, to 95.

A & K 540-972-2000 or 540-760-9001

Manassas—\$599,900. 4BR, 3.5 Col. 1.71 acres, Deck, Patio/Fpl, Media Rm w/120in big screen. Cheryl Kenny 703-338-2980 CROSSROADS REALTY

Montgomery Village—\$385,000, Townhouse, 5 br, 3 ba, 1 1/2ba, 3 FLS, eat-in kitchen, fenced yard, deck, fp, 240-994-5683

Elisabeth Aronez
Fairfax Realty, Inc.

NEED To Buy or Sell Your Home In This Tough Market? I'll work hard with you to make it happen! Call Ms. Njeri Clark Keller Williams Preferred Properties, 202-487-7131

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Oak Hill 12556 Quincy Adams Ct

\$619K SPECIAL OFFER

15 DAYS ONLY!—4BR, 2FBA & 2HBA, fin bsmt, hdwd flrs, & in-ground heated pool w/jacuzzi. FSBO. Open House Sun 12/03 1-4pm. Call Hugh, Hm: 703-476-7187 wrk: 703-914-8700, ext 1301

Ocean Front Cocoa Beach Fl \$318,000

Great location!

walk to Ron-Jons or Cocoa Beach pier

\$318000, 5000 Ocean Beach Blvd, Condominium, built 1972, 1168 sf, 2 br, 2 ba, 1 Fls, 1 Car Attached gar, eat-in kitchen, balc, new carpet, brick front, 800-819-2830

Deam Home Realty Inc

Ron Riggs 407-869-4529

Onancock—\$1,490,000, 15234 East Road, Waterfront Estate, All brick, 3 br, 3 ba, 2 Car Detached gar, form dr, form lr, hw flrs, fp, 5.8 acs, 600ft frontage.

757-665-4203

PROBLEM CREDIT OK!!

Manassas—\$315000, 9340 fringe tree lane, Townhouse/Townhome, built 1995, 1656 sf, 3 br, 2 ba, 1 1/2ba, 3 FLS, eat-in kitchen, fenced yard, newer appliances, Small Down, \$2800 per month. 703-869-9433

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23+ ACRES-\$124,900

This min. property has everything you want! Creek, usability, and long range min. views! Low financing. Call now for more details! 1-800-888-1262

BETTY/POT \$1.4M—\$200 PRICE REDUCTION! 4BR, 4BA renv brk ram surr by \$3M homes! 202-468-9988

BOWLING GREEN

LOOK out

* TRENDS, CULTURE, DISCOVERIES, IDEAS, PEOPLE

Families

Kids growing up at a faster pace; parents find ways to hold on

Zach Plante is close with his parents — he plays baseball with them and, on weekends, helps with work in the small vineyard they keep at their northern California home.

Lately, though, his parents have begun to notice subtle changes in their son. Among other things, he's announced that he wants to grow his hair longer — and sometimes greets his father with "Yo, Dad!"

"Little comments will come out of his mouth that have a bit of that teen swagger," says Tom Plante, Zach's dad.

The thing is, Zach isn't a teen. He's 10 years old — one part, a fun-loving fifth-grader who likes to watch the Animal Planet network, the other a soon-to-be middle schooler who wants an iPod.

In some ways, it's simply part of a kid's natural journey toward independence. But child development experts say physical and behavioral changes that would have been typical of teenagers decades ago are now common among "tweens" — kids ages 8 to 12.

Some of them are going on "dates" and talking on their own cell phones. They listen to sexually charged pop music, play mature-rated video games and spend time gossiping on MySpace. And more girls are wearing makeup and clothing that some consider beyond their years.

Zach is starting to notice it in his friends, too, especially the way they treat their parents.

"A lot of kids can sometimes be annoyed by their parents," he says. "If I'm playing with them at one of their houses, then they kind of ignore their parents. If their parents do them a favor, they might just



SON RISE, SON SET: Ten-year-old Natalie Wickstrom practices the piano; Zach Plante, also 10, and his parents play together. Their parents worry about adult influences.

INSIDE

Eva Longoria
to wed Tony
Parker | 42



Live Online: Chatting with Adrian Fenty | 40

Blog Log: Sadness over lost yellow Wiggle | 40



Life in Be-Tween

say, 'OK,' but not notice that much."

The shift that's turning tweens into the new teens is complex — and worrisome to parents and some professionals who deal with children. They wonder if kids are equipped to handle the thorny issues that come with the adolescent world.

"I'm sure this isn't the first time in history people have been talking about it. But I definitely feel like these kids are growing up faster — and I'm not sure it's always a good thing," says Dr. Liz Alderman, an adolescent medicine specialist at Montefiore Medical Center in New York City. She's been in practice for 16 years and has noticed a gradual but undeniable change in attitude in that time.

She and others who study and treat children say the reasons it's

I think I bought my first ABBA single at 13 or 14 — and here my 7-year-old wants me to download Kelly Clarkson all the time.

CLAIRE UNTERSEHER
CHICAGO MOTHER

happening are both physical and social.

Several published studies have found, for instance, that some tweens' bodies are developing faster, with more girls starting menstruation in elementary school — a result doctors often attribute to improved nutrition and, in some cases, obesity. While boys are still being studied,

the findings about girls have caused some endocrinologists to lower the limits of early breast development to first or second grade.

Beyond the drugs, sex and rock n' roll their boomer and Gen X parents navigated, technology and consumerism have accelerated the pace of life, giving kids easy access to influences that may or may not be parent-approved. Sex, violence and foul language that used to be relegated to late-night viewing and R-rated movies are expected fixtures in everyday TV.

Diane Levin, a professor of human development and early childhood at Wheelock College in Boston, is among those who've taken aim at toys deemed too violent or sexual.

"We've crossed a line. We can

no longer avoid it — it's just so in our face," says Levin, author of the upcoming book "So Sexy So Soon: The Sexualization of Childhood."

Earlier this year, she and others from a group known as the Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood successfully pressured Hasbro to drop plans for a line of children's toys modeled after the singing group Pussycat Dolls.

Other parents, including Clyde Otis III, are trying their own methods. "I don't want to be like a prude. But some of the stuff out there, it's just out of control sometimes," says Otis, a father of three from Maplewood, N.J.

"Beyoncé singing about bouncing her butt all over the place is a little much — at least for an 8-year-old." MARTHA IRVINE (AP)

LOOK out Online

 from readexpress.com

Local Clubs Sing the Blues

MUSIC | The prospect of the House of Blues opening a location in the nation's capital isn't music to the ears of local club owners. As The Washington Post reported on Thursday, the National Capital Revitalization Corp. has a non-binding agreement with the national live music venue chain to build a location near 5th and I streets NW, east of Mount Vernon Square. The owner of the 9:30 Club, for instance, says he'll lose half his business.

While the House of Blues' exact effect on local clubs, ticket prices and other promotions dynamics is hard to predict, in the past half-year, a collection of new music venues and bars on H Street NE has opened to the music-loving public.

If a House of Blues outpost opens in the nation's capital, it will be interesting to see if the District's ever-so-particular cadre of music hipsters — The New York Times on Thursday described the Black Cat as having an "eclectically raffish crowd" — would ever embrace the ever-so-corporate Clear Channel-owned House of Blues. But perhaps that's looking too far ahead. Many music scenesters haven't warmed up to the emerging — and still somewhat inaccessible — H Street scene yet. MICHAEL GRASS (EXPRESS)

U R Cute, C U @ 8? ;->

DATING | Technology sure has changed the dating scene and OOHBARRACUDA.BLOGSPOT.COM



GERALD MARTINEAU/TWP

COMPETITION: In the coming years, will Justin Timberlake play the 9:30 Club?

refuses to be courted via text message. After she told one boy she wasn't interested, he continued to send her cute text messages and asked her to lunch. The whole thing left her wondering: "Is it really OK to text ... someone ... who has made it clear that they don't like you like that because a text isn't a 'big deal' the way a phone call apparently must be these days?" Needless to say, she didn't

return his text to schedule lunch for "another time."

What is the proper dating etiquette? Send your thoughts to COMMENTS@READEXPRESS.COM. KELLY DINARDO

→ Coming Up Today

As the Nationals' new ballpark is built, nearby buildings are torn down. And many business owners have nowhere to go, especially Northeast.

Poll Center

TODAY'S QUESTION

Does the D.C. area overreact to the threat of snow?

1. Yes
2. No

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Should fast food chains be forced to cut trans fats?

YES **NO**

69%

31%

As of 6:10 p.m. Thursday. Not a scientific poll

GIVE YOUR OPINION ON TODAY'S POLL QUESTION AND GET A STATION-BY-STATION BREAKDOWN OF HOW YOUR FELLOW METRORAIL COMMUTERS VOTED AT READEXPRESS.COM/POLLCENTER.PHP



"Oh, I am so excited about my first Chicago snowstorm. Snow me in, baby; I am on vacation."

UNLIKE MOST WASHINGTON-AREA RESIDENTS, BABYBANANA.BLOGSPOT.COM WELCOMES THE SNOW THAT IS FALLING AROUND THE BLOGGER WHILE VISITING THE WINDY CITY. LOCALLY, IT WILL BE WINDY TODAY, WITH SOME RAIN POSSIBLE AND COOLER TEMPERATURES EXPECTED FOR THE WEEKEND.

Saudi Influence

"Saudi Arabia may be telling the U.S. to get out and let a new balance of power emerge in the Middle East. Whatever the risks involved with a possible Saudi-Iranian clash in Iraq, now might be a good time for Bush to listen to his friends in Riyadh."

THEMODERATEVOICE.COM ON THE ROLE OF SAUDI ARABIA IN SHAPING MIDEAST POLICY.

Suburban Mystery

"...[T]his has been at least the fourth time this year that this specific Quizno's has been closed due to a supposed 'electrical problem.' ... [E]very time this happens, all the other stores in the same strip mall are coincidentally operating just fine."

THEUPSTATELIFE.COM WORKS NEAR A MYSTERIOUS QUIZNO'S IN MARYLAND.



Hearing the High Court

"Releasing same-day audio tapes of ALL Supreme Court oral arguments, regardless of the level of 'public interest,' would take a clean, bright-line approach to the issue. It would allow the public to learn more about the workings of the court, but without intrusion of cameras in the courtroom."

ABOVETHELAW.COM



Kids Denied Original Yellow Wiggle

"The funniest thing about the article is the fact that Murry (red shirt) said kids won't even notice. They'll just see a yellow shirt and black hair and just assume it's Greg. No word on if they will make the poor guy change his name."

MATTTULLIS.BLOGSPOT.COM RELAYS NEWS ABOUT GREG, THE YELLOW-SHIRTED MEMBER OF THE POPULAR "WIGGLES" CHILDREN'S GROUP, WHO REPORTEDLY LEFT THE GROUP DUE TO HEALTH REASONS.

Live Online

The Next Mayor

Washington, D.C., Mayor-elect **ADRIAN FENTY** was online on Thursday at washingtonpost.com to discuss his plans for improving the city when he takes charge Jan. 2.

How do you plan to address the homeless problem in D.C.?

Though there are a variety of different factors to solve homelessness, the core of our best practices centers [on] affordable housing. Our policies will be similar to those found in San Francisco and New York, where supportive affordable housing is used instead of sending homeless residents immediately to shelters.

I am deeply concerned and feel threatened by the wave of gentrification in the city. Already, the city is planning on "relocating" me and my family and neighbors, so they can resell my apartment to developers.

 I commend school Superintendent Janey for his state of DCPS. We both share the belief that the school system needs to move forward quicker and with more efficiency and effectiveness. Over the next month, I will look at different ways that I can improve the effectiveness of the superintendent.

How do you plan to stop this?

Every housing project is different, but I believe that, as mayor, if I make sure that each renovation project guarantees one-for-one replacement of everyone who is currently in the development that we can go a long way toward preventing problems like yours and others.

What is the No. 1 [thing] you hope to accomplish for the city during your term?
Dramatically improve our public education system.

Will you push the statehood issue?
Yes. I plan to raise the issue then and consistently until we get our full franchise.

Did school superintendent [Clifford] Janey's presentation change your mind about how you want to approach working with the school board?

I command school Superintendent Janey for his state of DCPS. We both share the belief that the school system needs to move forward quicker and with more efficiency and effectiveness. Over the next month, I will look at different ways that I can improve the effectiveness of the superintendent.

DON'T

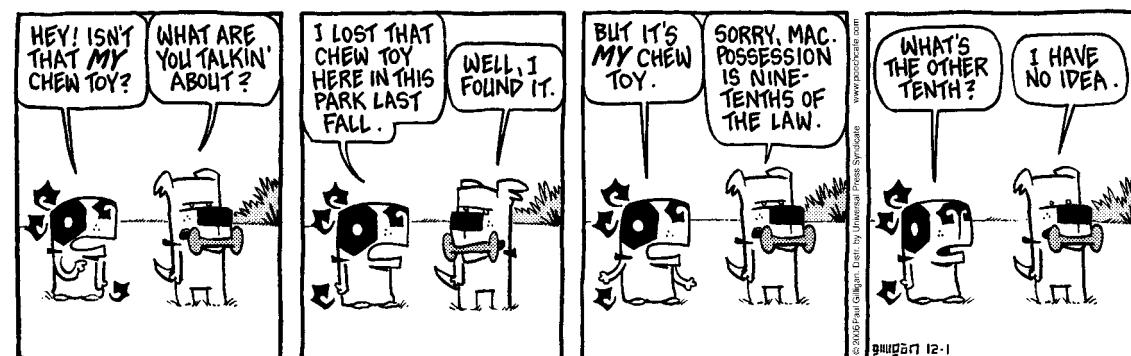
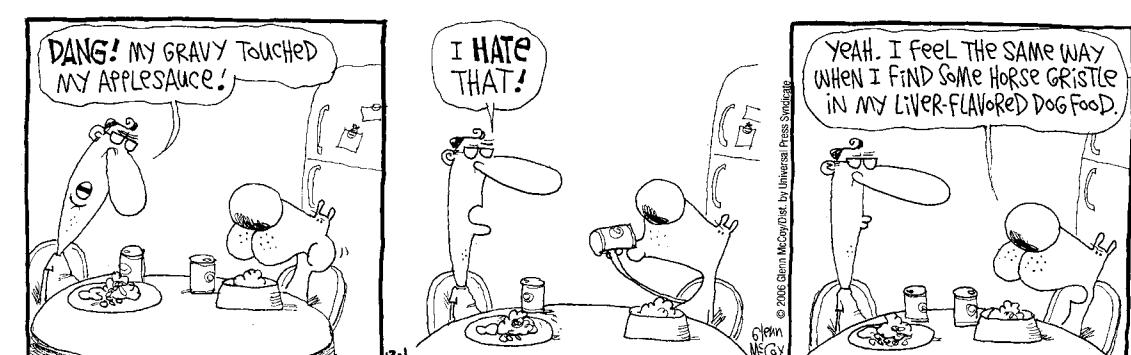
FORGET THE TROOPS. Supporting the troops is more than just putting a ribbon magnet on your car. It's about giving them CDs, DVDs, cameras, phone cards and snacks, too. Operation Gratitude (opgratitude.com) provides a holiday wish list and a way to give.

 **TODAY ON LIVE ONLINE:** Director Catherine Hardwicke will take questions about her new film, "The Nativity Story," at 12:15 p.m. | washingtonpost.com/liveonline

LOOK out

Bizarro | Dan Piraro**Cornered** | Mike Baldwin

"The last time I went out with a guy, he expected me to split the bill."

Pooch Cafe | Paul Gilligan**Pearls Before Swine** | Stephan Pastis**The Duplex** | Glenn McCoy

Horoscope

By Stella Wilder

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) It's up to you to provide others with certain key needs at this time. Never fear: Your efforts will not go unrecognized — or unrewarded.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) You can avoid any serious emotional pitfalls — provided you pinpoint your current vulnerability as early as possible.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) Take care of your mental, physical and emotional health. Make time for a visit to someone who knows you well; speak frankly to him or her.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) Your luck is likely to increase, but this does not mean you should throw caution to the wind. You actually have cause to play it safer than usual.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) A down-to-earth approach is advised. You want to keep yourself from building castles in the air; stick to what you know.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) You'll find yourself quickly swept up in another's

pet cause — but you can do some good work and contribute a great deal toward major progress.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) Now is no time to sit back and let opportunities pass you by; you have many choices to make, and one or two may defy your usual rationale.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) Spend some time alone to recharge your emotional, spiritual batteries. You've been too willing to get caught up in the grind.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) You must be willing to live up to your duties and obligations. Shirk, and you'll pay for it for some time to come.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) You may find it difficult to communicate openly with a loved one or co-worker. There is more to this dilemma than meets the eye.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) You'll win a good deal of respect, but come nightfall you may do something that may risk everything you've gained to this point.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) Don't be fooled: What you don't know can, indeed, hurt you — and those around you, as well. If you don't know what you're doing, don't meddle.

Letters

Nursing Sex Not Comparable

WHILE SEX IS A NOTABLE example of an unacceptable public behavior, I fail to see the relevant comparison it bears to a woman nursing her child ("Breast-Feed in Private," Nov. 28). An infant must eat fre-

quently for its nourishment and well-being, if not for the sake of silence, whereas sex can obviously be delayed until a couple is behind closed doors. It is unfortunate that because breasts are so sexually coveted, their important biological purpose is shamed and discouraged.

— GABRIELLE MASTEN
Derwood, Md.

WRITE TO EXPRESS: Include name, hometown and telephone number. Submissions may be edited. E-mail to inbox@readexpress.com or mail to Express Letters, PO Box 17370, Arlington, VA 22216.

Today in History

1904 The Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis closes after seven months and some 20 million visitors.

1921 The Navy flies the first non-rigid dirigible to use helium; the C-7 travels from Hampton Roads, Va., to Washington, D.C.

1955 Rosa Parks, a black seamstress, refuses to give up her seat to a white man on a Montgomery, Ala., city bus. Mrs. Parks is arrested, sparking a yearlong boycott of the buses by blacks.



Rosa Parks was arrested today in 1955 after refusing to give up her bus seat.

1996 The Arab League holds a meeting in Cairo, after which it warns Israel that peace efforts will be endangered if Israel insists on expanding Jewish settlements.

LOOK out

People



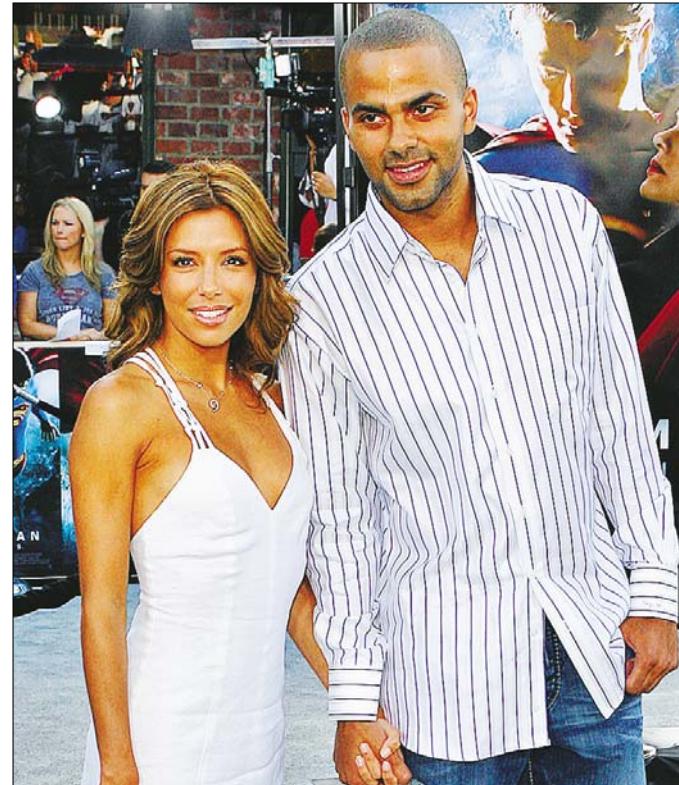
Now that's a presidential ticket!

MEETINGS**Obama and Ludacris Rap Together, but Not Musically**

BARACK OBAMA met privately with **LUDACRIS** on Wednesday. "We talked about empowering the youth," said the rapper. Ludacris was in town to launch the YouthAIDS "Kick Me" campaign to raise HIV/AIDS awareness during a stop at Northwestern University in the Chicago suburb of Evanston. (AP)

SWINGER**So What Does That Make Vanessa Minnillo, Huh?**

NICK LACHEY is the latest celebrity to stake ownership in a Triple-A baseball team. Lachey was introduced Wednesday as a part-owner of the Tacoma Rainiers. "Sports for me ... is truly my passion," said Lachey. (AP)

**PROPOSALS****Borat, Stay Away!**

HER MARRIAGE DIDN'T WORK OUT on "Desperate Housewives," but things are looking rosy in real life for Eva Longoria: She's engaged to basketball star Tony Parker. "Tony flew into Los Angeles last night after his game and surprised Eva at her home as she got off work," Liza Anderson told The Associated Press on Thursday via e-mail. "The proposal was romantic and perfect." (AP)

5 Day Forecast for the Washington Area

Heavy afternoon thunderstorms



Heavy evening thunderstorm



Partly sunny, cooler



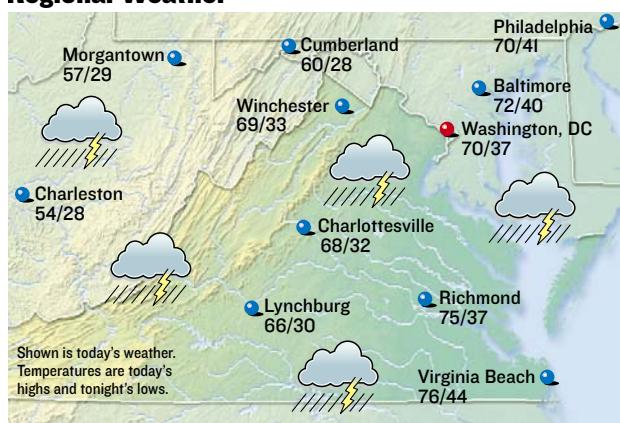
Mostly cloudy



Mostly cloudy, windy, cold



Partly sunny

Regional Weather**Almanac**

Washington, D.C., through 4 p.m. Thur.

Temperature

High	70°
Low	50°
Normal high	52°
Normal low	36°
Average humidity	79%

Precipitation

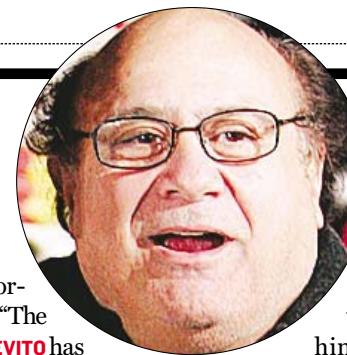
24 hours ending 4 p.m.	Trace
Month to date	5.16"
Normal month to date	3.03"
Year to date	46.21"
Last year to date	41.04"
Normal year to date	36.30"

For up-to-the-minute weather, see:
washingtonpost.com/weather

Forecasts and graphics provided by AccuWeather, Inc. ©2006

BOOZING**See, Mel? Not All Drunk Celebrities Are Bigoted**

An especially colorful appearance on "The View" by **DANNY DEVITO** has eyebrows raised and tongues wagging that the veteran actor may not have been himself Wednesday morning. DeVito said he'd been drinking with George Clooney the night



He lost his neck in a tragic accident.

before, and that "it was the last seven Limoncellos that were going to get" him. DeVito's publicist told TMZ.com the actor had asked for Barbara Walters' phone number so he could tell her "what needed to be said privately." Walters produces the television show. (AP)

EVICTIONS**Anna Nicole Told to Leave**

A former boyfriend of **ANNA NICOLE SMITH** has obtained a court judgment ordering her out of her residence and he plans to seek her forcible eviction unless she leaves by Thursday.



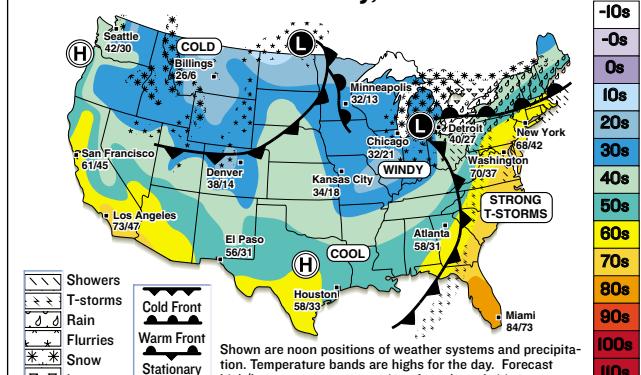
Howard K. Stern, an attorney who is Smith's companion, said the judgement was "improperly obtained." (AP)

IF ONLY**Judge Indicts Media for Inflating Adoption Issue**

MADONNA accepted a Malawian High Court ruling allowing a coalition of human rights groups to monitor her as she tries to adopt a Malawian toddler. A judge ruled Wednesday that two groups could join the adoption process as friends of the court and pursue their application for a full judicial review of the interim custody order he granted to Madonna and her husband. (AP)



Madonna has vowed not to style her hair again until the adoption is final.

National Weather for Friday, December 1**National Cities**

City	Today Hi/Lo/W	Sat. Hi/Lo/W	City	Today Hi/Lo/W	Sat. Hi/Lo/W
Atlanta	58/31/t	56/37/pc	Amsterdam	54/46/pc	48/46/c
Boston	64/40/t	51/33/pc	Athens	61/46/s	61/45/s
Chicago	32/21/sn	34/15/pc	Berlin	48/41/s	52/41/pc
Dallas	54/30/s	51/29/s	Buenos Aires	88/63/t	81/63/pc
Denver	38/14/pc	27/8/sn	Calgary	11/-5/sf	11/2/c
Honolulu	82/70/pc	81/72/pc	Dublin	54/41/pc	50/41/c
Los Angeles	73/47/s	75/47/s	Geneva	56/36/pc	56/43/r
Miami	84/73/pc	85/73/pc	Moscow	38/24/sn	36/24/c
New York City	68/42/t	49/38/pc	Rome	61/43/pc	61/43/pc
Orlando	83/62/pc	80/60/c	Sydney	86/68/s	76/64/r
Seattle	42/30/pc	41/31/pc	Tokyo	54/42/pc	53/41/s

s-sunny, pc-partly cloudy, c-cloudy, sh-showers, t-thunderstorms, r-rain, sf-snow flurries, sn-snow, i-ice.

LOOKout

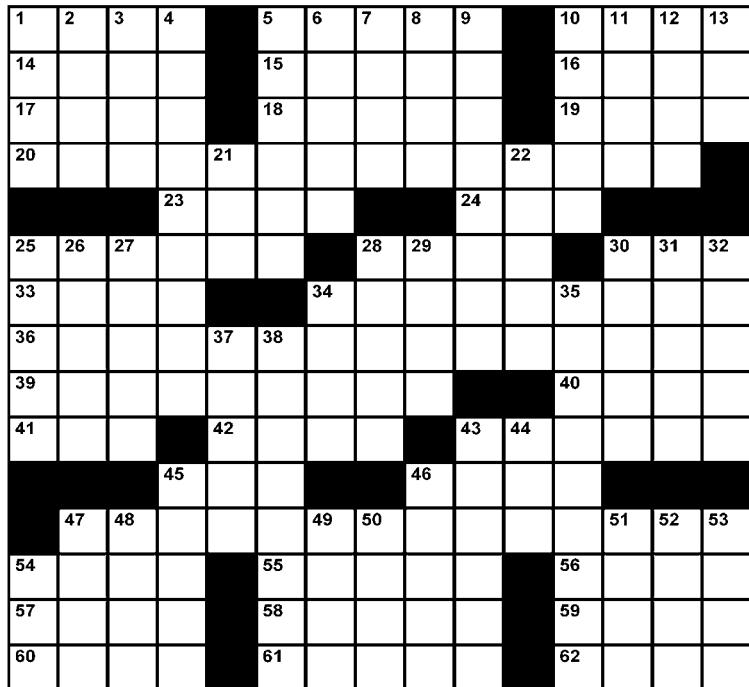
Together Again

ACROSS

- Take ___ it comes
- "___ of Two Cities"
- Directed
- Magic power
- Board, as a train
- Together, in music
- Sixth-day creation
- ___-Unis
- Crafted
- Family financial figure
- Rhode Island fowls
- "So, there you are!"
- Eye covering
- Entice
- Span. lady
- It goes with wash
- Petitions
- Name in the news
- Baby baskets
- Ancient theaters
- No seats sign, briefly
- Actor Kilmer and namesakes
- "Gorillas in the Mist" author Dian
- Legal matter
- Lectern platform
- Its logo contains two U's
- Enfant terrible
- Military incendiary
- Terrible market share

57 Freedom from hardship

- Cast pearls before ___
- Gentle firelight, e.g.
- "Oh, me!"
- Actress Samantha
- Cause for a child's punishment, perhaps
- Apple that's plugged in
- List type
- In ___ (in hot water)
- Some hats
- It may be hidden
- Places for tricornes
- Just ___ (not much)
- Auctioneer's first offering
- Caught
- Polynesian island group
- Wax-wrapped cheese
- Titian's "Venus of Urbino," e.g.
- Kind of time
- Comparative of "-y"
- Aviary sound
- Some lab specimens
- Migrants' advocate Chavez
- Attachment to a rodeo saddle, often
- Some Baltic natives



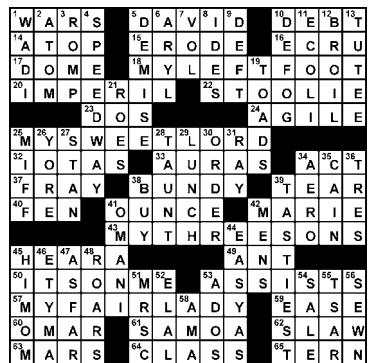
EDITED BY TIMOTHY PARKER

29 Gadgeteers' concerns

- Garage relatives
- Visit for a second time
- Put to the test
- Yellow, edible Indian fruit
- Channel events
- Musk-secreting mammal
- Somehow
- Migrants' advocate Chavez
- Attachment to a rodeo saddle, often
- Some Baltic natives

passage"

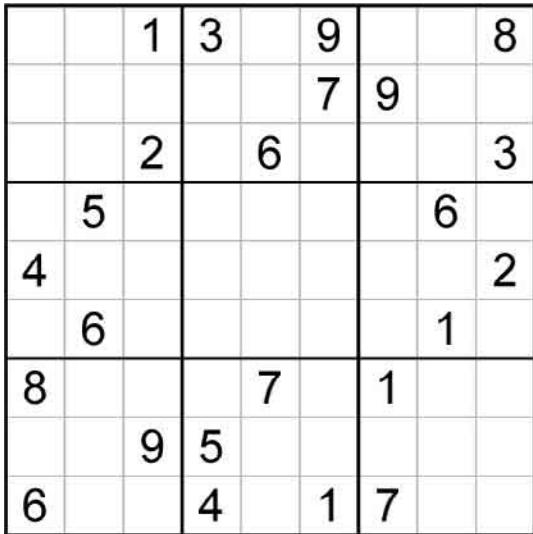
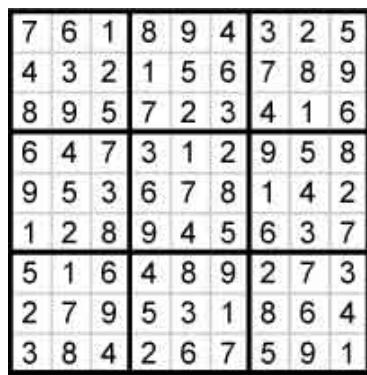
- Singer Ross
- Altaic languages
- Org. with many missions
- Animated TV deputy
- Make ___ of oneself
- Vincent Lopez hit of 1922
- Grandson of 17-Across
- Hems but doesn't haw
- "Maude" star Arthur

Yesterday's Solution

Sudoku

Degree of Difficulty: HARD

Fill in the boxes so each row, column and 3-by-3 square includes the digits 1 through 9. For solution, tips and computer program, see www.sudoku.com

 **Need more Sudoku?**
Find another Sudoku puzzle in the Comics section of the Post every Sunday and in the Style section every Monday through Saturday.

Yesterday's Solution


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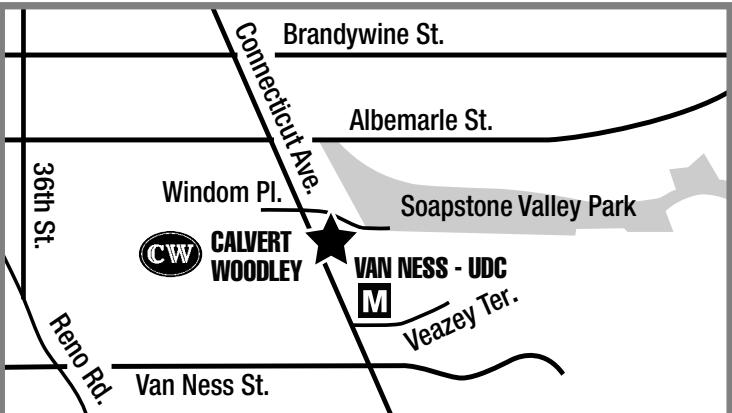
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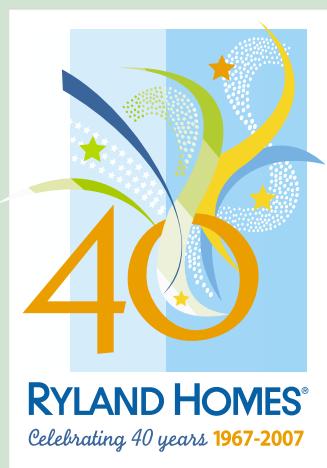
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Karate Kid:
Slater's gone
clean, kicking
some butt in
'Bobby' | E2

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face time

■ Except for the assassin, Christian Slater plays the only bad guy in "Bobby," Emilio Estevez's ensemble flick about the day RFK was shot. Just as his kitchen manager character reforms (at least a little), the naughty actor has also been undergoing a transformation recently. Trading wild nights for daddy duties seems to suit the 37-year-old star.

Bobby Kennedy was such an icon. Do any politicians today match up? Barack Obama. Through this movie, I've gotten to meet him and he was very cool. He's got charisma, charm, style, a nice smile and kind eyes. And he seems to have a good head on his shoulders, too.

The main character of the movie is the Ambassador Hotel. Are there any places that are particularly special to you?

Where I went with my son this summer to Africa to Richard Branson's private game reserve, Ulusaba. It means "place of little fear." It's magical and gorgeous and you see these prides of lions and elephant herds and rhinos. That place — I loved it more than anywhere I've been in the world. It was great to

get away from everything, too. We went into town and they don't have politics or glamour magazines, but there's no crime and there's a real sense of community. Then we flew back into London when the terror threat hit, and I thought, "This is what we call civilization?"

You play the head of the kitchen in "Bobby." I'm guessing you've never worked in a restaurant, but are you a chef at home?

Honestly, no. I've pretended to do it in movies. I may have an undiscovered talent that's in me, but I've haven't been in one place long enough to try.

From your bag here, I see you like gum a whole lot.

I'm trying to wean myself off the



GETTY IMAGES

Christian Slater

ACTOR, STARRING IN 'BOBBY'

Nicorette. I've been on it for a year and a half, and the gum seems like a reasonable alternative. I keep seeing interviews of myself chomping, and that's not good. It gives me pleasure, so I do it to excess.

What else is giving you pleasure these days?

My children. We've been horseback riding and having adventures run-

ning around the globe. We've gone to New York, and it was fun living in London for a few months.

Did you pick up an accent?

Just certain words. Mate. Cheers. They're still with me.

Are you a gadget guy?

I love going to the Apple Store and seeing what I can do with my com-

"He was 2, and he'd come with me and run around and hit me with swords."

puter. I made a video in Africa.

I hear you do karate?

I was playing tough guys and it was embarrassing that I didn't know what the hell I was doing. So I thought I'd pick up some tips. I worked my way up through the ranks, but I didn't achieve my black belt and then I went to London. But I'll start again. My son is really into it. When I first started, he was 2 and he'd come with me and just run around and hit me with swords. Now he's always asking me to start again.

What will you do if he gets a black belt before you?

I'll be very proud — and very scared.

VICKY HALLETT (EXPRESS)

IN THE POST TODAY



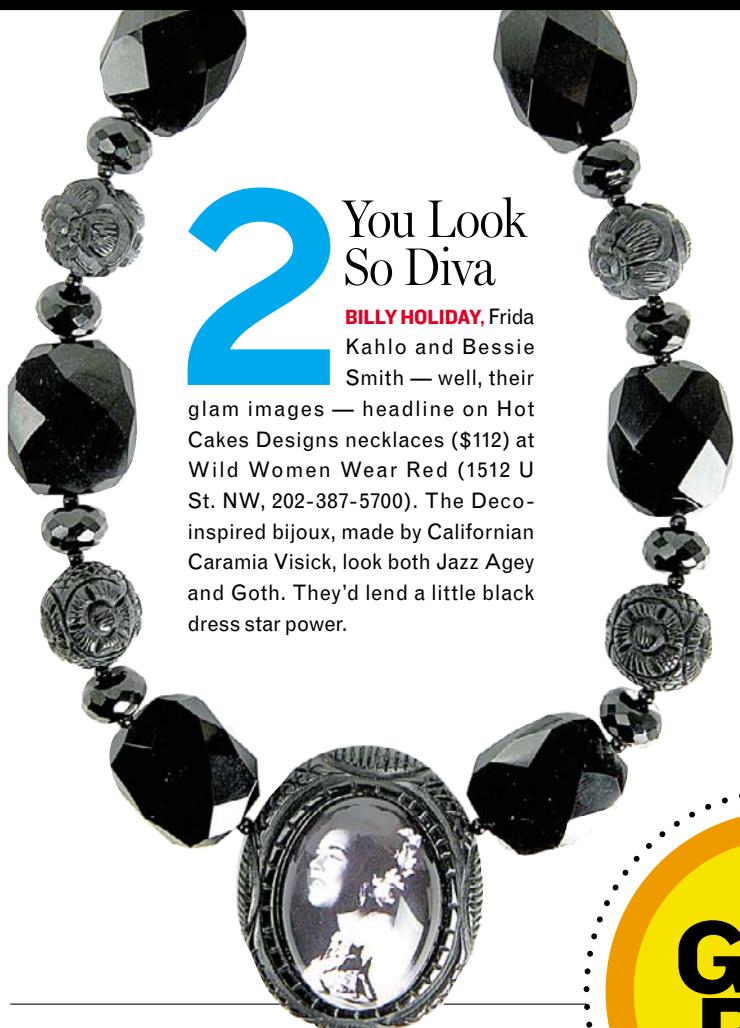
HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS

Festivals, concerts, Nutcrackers, light displays and visits from Santa, find out where to celebrate the season in Weekend's annual guide to holiday events.

Also in Weekend: PlayStation 3 vs. the Wii. Patti LaBelle goes gospel. A chat with Morgan Freeman. Plus, what's new at the movies and on DVD.

Great weekends start with the Weekend section. Get it today!

The Washington Post



2 You Look So Diva

BILLY HOLIDAY, Frida Kahlo and Bessie Smith — well, their glam images — headline on Hot Cakes Designs necklaces (\$112) at Wild Women Wear Red (1512 U St. NW, 202-387-5700). The Deco-inspired bijoux, made by Californian Caramia Visick, look both Jazz Agey and Goth. They'd lend a little black dress star power.



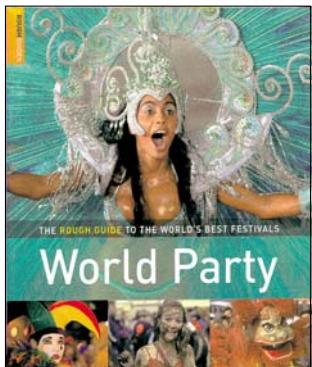
3 A Hole New World

FORGET ABOUT THE KRISPY KREME vs. Dunkin' Donuts debate. Real fried-dough fiends are getting their fix today at the Fractured Prune (2153 P St. NW; 202-822-0880), the Ocean City chain that's finally made its way into our city. It allows customers to design their own desserts (95 cents each) from a crazy array of glazes and toppings (that's "black forest" above, with raspberry glaze, chocolate chips and coconut). Get free samples Friday from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Grab Bag

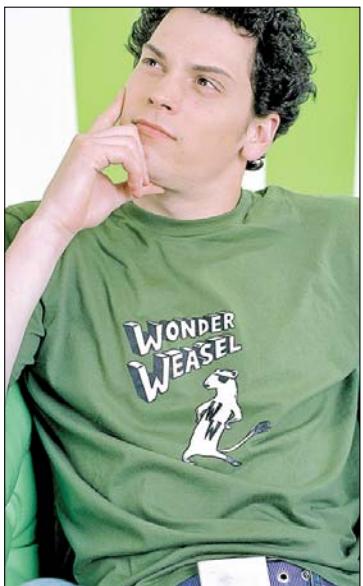
4 Party Planner

LIVING IT UP requires planning it out, so start charting your 2007 fiesta schedule with "World Party" (\$25, Rough Guides). It has everything from Pamplona and Rio Carnival to Finland's Wife-Carrying Championship and Mongolia's "Manly Games."



The Internet Duded Up 5

LOCAL INDIE LABEL Webtique/style warehouse unsungdesigners.com (open Saturdays, noon-6 p.m., alley at 2412 18th St. NW; 202-528-9525), long a fave off femme fashionistas, just got into guy wear. Casual cool offerings range from T-shirts by D.C. talent Jon Wye (pictured, \$40) to chunky wood and silver rings (\$50) by Loving Anvil, just the thing for duds of Dupont or men of Petworth. Also nice: Etcetera Media's wool felt messenger bags.



1 Global Warming

GREEN AND RED orbs stuffed with Currier and Ives scenes and faux flakes make us want to take a long winter nap. But Koziol's hipster snowglobes (\$10-\$17, Home Rule, 1807 14th St. NW; 202-797-5544) re-imagine the teeny freeze zones in Day-Glo brights. Rudolph and a buddy (above, \$17), stylish in shades of pink, play reindeer games against a backdrop of orange and crimson. A snowman, carrying what might be a billy club, stands in a lime-hued town that looks like Dr. Seuss' Whoville, perhaps ready to clobber the Grinch.



dear manolo

ANSWERS FROM THE SHOEBOOKER

I desperately need a new pair of casual winter boots, but I am a poor working girl. —CAMPBELL

■ Manolo says, winter, it has finally arrived in the Washington, D.C., soon to bring with it the first light dusting of snow, at which point the drivers of Washington, all of whom were apparently raised in San Diego, will simultaneously lose control of their automobiles. Of course, life must still go on, even if the streets are filled with slush and the abandoned SUVs.



The cat needs the milk and you have run out of the moisturizer, and so you must walk to the drugstore. But you want to look your best, because you never know when you may bump into that Georgetown water polo player on whom you have the small crush. Happily, you are not worried because you have recently purchased the new pair of the Timberland McKennies (\$124, zappos.com), the handsome, wedge-heeled boots with the faux fur that looks most chic in that outdoorsy-rugged way that appeals to the broad-shouldered athletic boys.

@ Ask the Manolo a question at manolo@shoebooks.com. Visit the Manolo at shoebooks.com.

ON THE COVER

Express Top Model Alexandra wears a top by Julie Haus (\$260. Maggie and Lola, 1013 E St. SE; 202-234-2850), Paula Mendoza's necklace (part of a trio, \$363, Circle Boutique, 1608 17th St. NW; 202-518-2212) and Tarina Tarantino earrings (\$70, tarinatarantino.com). Photo by Michelle Repiso. Styling by Lauretta McCoy.

Styles | holidays

Gadget Guide '06

Those who lack lust for tech toys shall never know the true joy of gadget gifts: the ability to survive holiday gatherings without a whit of small talk. Instead, ward off technophobic relatives with pulsating LEDs, cheerful beeps and vigorously wielded styluses.

Though it's too late to score the much-desired PlayStation 3, there's plenty more to baffle and amaze, from the Nintendo Wii's motion-aware controller to watches that interface with cell phones. And not all gadgets plug in, such as purely analog updates of Sudoku and the basketball.

Finally, an important note to givers of gadgets: Open the box. Make sure it works. Charge it up, if needed. Because nothing's more coal-in-the-stocking sad than waiting six hours to play with a new toy — or spending Christmas morning with tech support.



TEENY IMAGES ON A VIDEO IPOD will strain your eyes — unless you slip on View-Video Eyewear. Through these magic glasses (which will slip over prescription specs), you can gaze at an episode of "The Office" as though it's running on a 43-inch flat-screen. It also works with personal gaming systems for better views of your butt-kicking skills. (\$350, Sharper Image)

WORSHIP THE ENIGMA BEFORE YOU. It is Sudoku. It is a cube. When it's finished, you'll have solved 18 puzzles in all, with rows wrapping around the cube horizontally and vertically. Beginners can enjoy solving each cube face independently, though. Prepare for Metro rubbernecking. (\$10, sudokucube.net)



EQUIPPED WITH A LEICA LENS (translation: really good) and a 10x optical (translation: really big) zoom, the five-megapixel Panasonic Lumix DMC-TZ1S takes great pics even far from the action — handy when you're stuck in the nosebleed seats at FedEx Field. (\$300, Best Buy)

Road Warriors

Gizmos for the weary traveler — or commuter

SURE, THE RADIO CAN pinpoint Beltway backups. But the talking Magellan RoadMate 2200T can direct you around bad traffic on the spot. Or, detach it from the dash and use it as a GPS guide on hikes — it's waterproof! (\$500, magellangps.com)



BLACKBERRIES ARE TOO STUFFY. Sidekicks are too hip. For those Goldilocks who aren't locked into a smartphone contract, there's the just-right Treo 680, which repackages the much-admired PDA into a slimmer, more colorful casing. Its music and video capabilities make it even more fun. (around \$200 with contract, palm.com)



holidays | Styles



GIVE YOUR IPOD THE GIFT OF SURROUND SOUND this season. Or a surround speaker, at least, with this oval offering, which has a rich, warm sound. The JBL On Time also comes with a built-in clock: Set the alarm to interrupt your dreams with any song stored on your iPod. Or just tune it to your favorite AM/FM radio station. (\$250, jbl.com)

FINALLY, AN ELEGANT way to move music from PC to stereo. The Logitech Wireless DJ is compatible with iTunes, Media Player and Musicmatch; the remote's simple to grasp. (\$250, logitech.com)

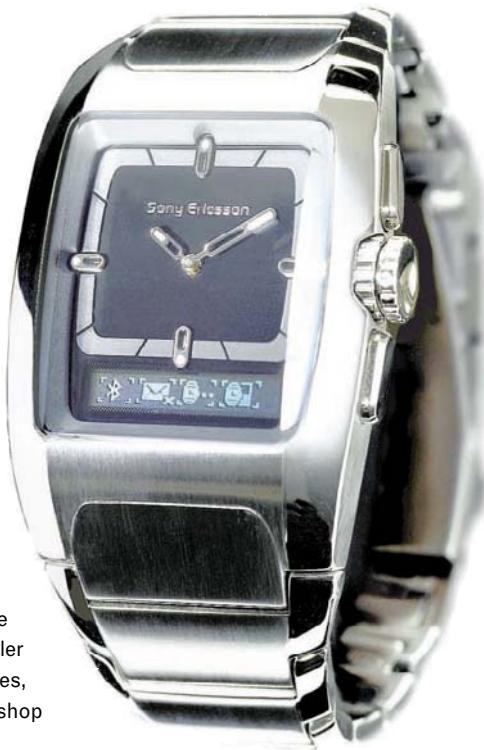
Tuned In

Commune with phones, stereos and the airwaves



MICROSOFT'S NEW ZUNE has some tricks the iPod doesn't: a built-in FM radio, wireless song-sharing with other Zunes, and the option of buying tunes via an all-you-can-handle subscription. But Apple's iTunes shop (not Zune-compatible) is user-friendlier. (\$249, zune.net)

CLOCKS ON CELL PHONES have made the watch obsolete. Not the Sony Ericsson MBW-100, though, which interacts with mobiles via Bluetooth. Glance at your wrist to check your caller ID; with Sony Walkman phones, control the tunes, too. (\$399, wireless.sonyericsson.com)



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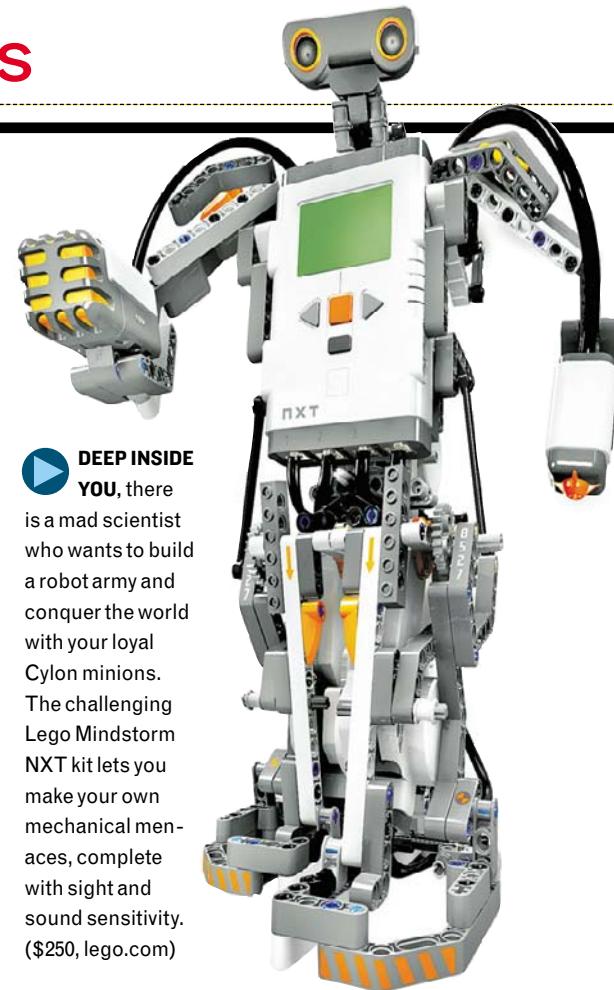
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Styles | holidays

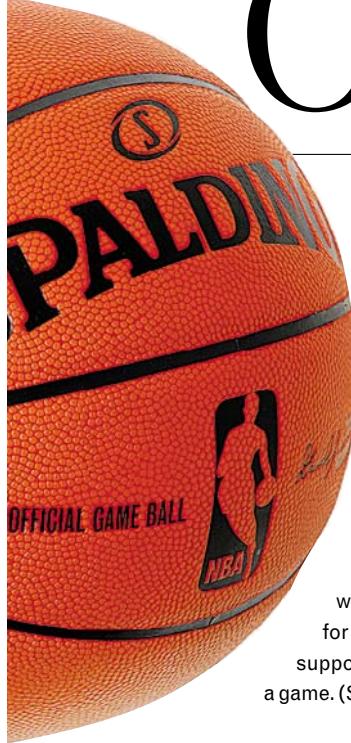


► **HIGH-DEF TV SETS? MEH.** All the hardcore techies want HD camcorders. The Canon HV10 is one of the best of the first generation. Particularly helpful is the quick auto-focus feature: HD can be unforgiving, but the HV10 keeps the picture crisp. (\$1,500, usa.canon.com)

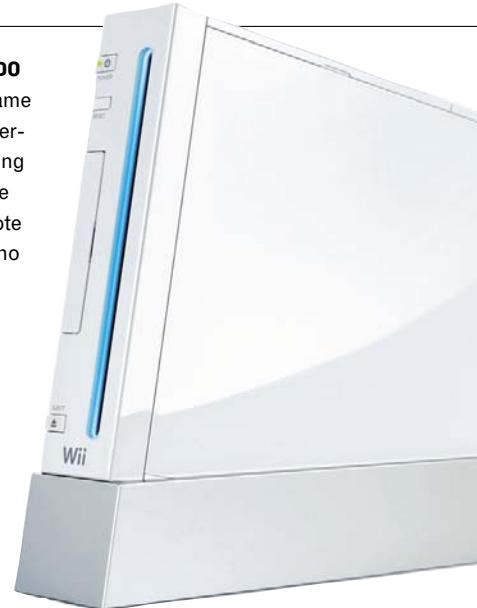


► **DEEP INSIDE YOU,** there is a mad scientist who wants to build a robot army and conquer the world with your loyal Cylon minions. The challenging Lego Mindstorms NXT kit lets you make your own mechanical menaces, complete with sight and sound sensitivity. (\$250, lego.com)

Game On



► **THE NBA'S NEW OFFICIAL BALL** is the Spalding Cross Traxxion, which nixes traditional leather for a patented microfiber that's supposed to keep the ball dry during a game. (\$100, spalding.com)



► **COULD THE NINTENDO WII** be the biggest game innovation since the first-person shooter? Whether swung like a racquet or a sword, the motion-sensitive Wii Remote gets you into the game like no other controller can. (\$250, wii.nintendo.com)

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A Photographic Fantasy

► The best ticket to a sporting event isn't a fancy box seat. It's a camera. So Washington Photo Workshops (washingtonphotoworkshops.com) gives its participants the chance to shoot at a variety of professional games—Wizards, Caps, Nationals and more—while getting pointers from some of the best in the biz. "They're at the finish line, on the field," said co-founder Jeffrey Snyder, a 30-year veteran of the industry. "And then they'll have these images to hang from their walls."

It requires some pricey equipment, including a high-end digital camera and laptop, and it costs \$3,995 for the eight sessions. But to have one's snapshots critiqued by a Sports Illustrated photo editor? That's priceless. v.h.

XX140c 2x1



TRANSFORMING MUSIC LESSONS into a video game might just make tickling the ivories appealing to tykes. "I Can Play Piano" is like Dance Dance Revolution, except the prompts on the screen require players to press keys instead of jump. Change modes to make it like reading music. (\$80, toy stores)



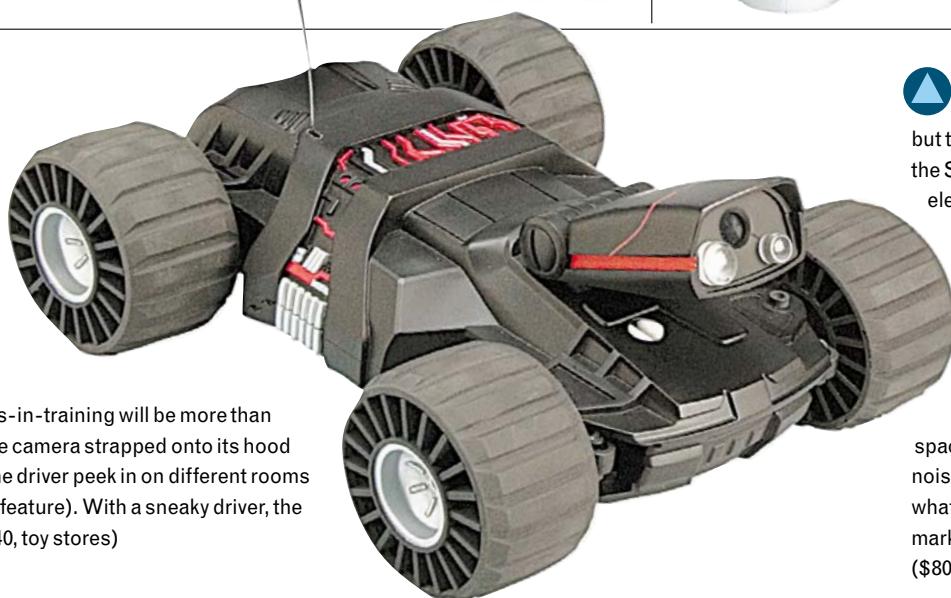
PROTECT THAT OUTRAGEOUSLY expensive PSP in the handy front pocket of the Gaming Hoodie Xtreme. The cozy covering (available in four colors) boasts built-in washable speakers in the hood, which connect to whatever you stick in the netting below. (\$33, Target)

Play Time

Electrifying youth, one toy at a time



WHAT'S THE ONLY WAY to make radio appeal to the young people of today? Let them broadcast their voices over it with the Smart Lab Rock Star Microphone. Kids can choose the music from their CD collection, pick a silent station and sing! (\$25, Barnes and Noble)



TURNING 16 IS OVERRATED. Drivers-in-training will be more than content with the Spy Video Car. The camera strapped onto its hood sends images to a set of shades that let the driver peek in on different rooms (even in the dark, thanks to a night-vision feature). With a sneaky driver, the results could be pretty incriminating. (\$140, toy stores)



DOODLING DOESN'T require batteries, but the electronic flare of the SparkArt Easel can elevate a mess into a masterpiece. Point the stylus at the included backgrounds, magnets and symbols that line the edge of the drawing space to hear funny noises or get prompts of what to draw. Just put a marker in the other hand. (\$80, toy stores)

the hot trend



Dress-Up Of the Future

Most tween-age gals are content to braid their dolls' hair and deck themselves out in pastel colors and strands of gaudy costume jewelry. But there's another breed of child out there: the budding fashionista.

For her, start with **DIGI MAKEOVER** (\$40, toy stores). She can snap a picture of herself with the unit and then appear on the TV, ready to be beautified with an array of hairstyles, eye colors, makeup choices and accessories.

The stylus is a bit clunky to work with, but the results are so hilariously fab, it's easy to forgive the slight delays. Plus, didn't she always want to know how she'd look as a brunette? Slumber parties will never be the same.

Once her look is developed, move on to **DESIGNER'S WORLD** (\$40, toy stores), which will teach her to dictate how other people should look.

The plug 'n' play lets budding designers create a fashion line, select models (and switch up their hairstyles), show a collection to judges and then sell garments — all in an imaginary land where you can buy new fabrics out of magazines.

If that's still too low-brow for your Marc Jacobs-obsessed offspring, treat them to one of FAO Schwarz's most extravagant gifts of the season, **CUS-TOM COUTURE** by Imagine This (\$800, fao.com). First, she'll get a portfolio with fabric swatches so she can select a material for her creation and start sketching.

Then she'll work with a designer to iron out the details of the look she's going for. And within eight weeks she'll be able to wear it. Over the top? Yes, but you can't expect your little ones to wait 20 years to get on "Project Runway." V.H.

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Styles | holidays



GIVE WRINKLES A ONE-TWO punch with Givenchy's No Surgetics Collagen Expert. The first allows you to fill in lines; the second is a cream that stimulates the skin's natural collagen production. (\$160, Saks Fifth Avenue, available in January 2007)

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NE S381 2x5

Future Perfect



SCIENTISTS STUDIED snake venom to come up with Z. Bigatti's Rescue Intensive Facial Treatment. It relaxes areas of repetitive movement the way snakes paralyze prey. What? It's no worse than botulinum toxin. (\$135, Nordstrom)

Cold fusion and time travel will have to wait. Scientists are too busy making skin care products from snake venom and gold, improving upon the humble scrub brush, and entirely eradicating aging from the human population by 2015. To see the future, just rub this stuff on your face. KRISTEN PAGE-KIRBY (EXPRESS)

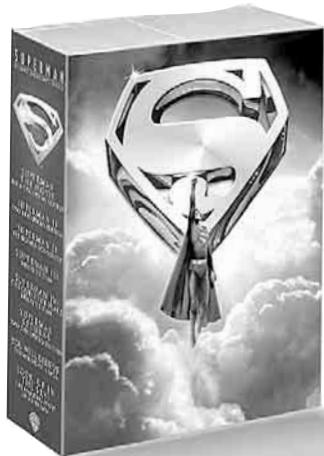


THE FOLLOW-UP to Lip Venom, the best-known (and most painful?) lip plumper, DuWop's 2nd Sin contains essential oils of cinnamon, wintergreen and ginger to give you a pout as succulent as Shiloh's mom's. (\$27, Sephora)



SCRUB-A-DUB-DUB with the Clarisonic Skin Care Brush, which buffs faces to smooth, squeaky-clean brilliance. Our sensitive-skinned tester used it once a day and, within a week, skin was clearer and brighter than ever before. (\$195, amazon.com)

"FOR \$525, it had better be made of pure gold ... oh, wait. It is." La Prairie's Cellular Radiance Concentrate Pure Gold uses 24-karat gold, quartz and liquid crystals to scatter light off the skin's surface, allegedly making you look younger in a single hour. (\$525, Neiman Marcus)



ANTI-KRYPTONITE: Even that evil baldy Lex Luther would want to have this handsome Superman collection for his media shelf.



Groupie Gifts

How to please the obsessive buff on your holiday list

Humans tend toward fanaticism, which makes it much easier to shop for them than, say, pets. Just pick a media addiction from this list, and forget about scouring the mall.

SUPERHERO SUPPORTER

→ The "Superman Ultimate Collector's Edition" (\$100, Warner Bros.) captures all of the Man of Steel's films in one shiny DVD box set. You'll get the good ("Superman," "Superman Returns" and Richard Donner's cut of "Superman II"), the bad (the original cut of "Superman II" and "Superman III") and the ugly ("Superman IV: The Quest for Peace"). But there is comfort in completion.

FILM SNOB

→ It'll take a massive bowl of popcorn to sit through "Essential Art House: 50 Years of Janus Films" (\$850, Criterion Collection). That's 50 movies — by legends like Fellini and Truffaut — packaged in a gorgeous box along with

a 200-page hardcover book filled with essays about the flicks (not that the owner of such a set would need them).

POST-PUNK ROCKER

→ Wrapped inside a fake corset is the four-disc set "Life Less Lived: The Gothic Box" (\$65, Rhino). Purists may scoff at choices like Flesh for Lulu's poppy "I Go Crazy," but the vast list of broody tunes by the likes of Nick Cave and Dead Can Dance should strike a chord with fans of dark sounds.

COMIC BOOK GEEK

→ Face front, true believers! From Abomination to Zzzax, the living electromagnetic field, "The Marvel Encyclopedia: The Definitive Guide to the Characters of the Marvel Universe" (\$40, DK) has all the info that the comic book obsessed freak in your life could ever need. Excelsior!

LOUNGE LIZARD

→ If you have a martini in hand and a comfy sofa to recline on, your soundtrack should be "Sinatra:



THE CURE: When wearing all black with clumpy black eyeliner and big black combat boots, one needs appropriate music on one's black iPod.

"Vegas" (\$80, Reprise). You'll get a kick out of the range of live recordings on four discs, from a 1961 session at the Sands Casino to a 1987 set at the Golden Nugget. Guests include Old Blue Eyes' daughter Nancy and Dean Martin. Plus, there's a bonus DVD with footage from a 1978 Caesar's gig.

WANNABE SPY

→ The world's most famous secret agent man gets his due with the "James Bond Ultimate Collection" (MGM), a set of the series' 20 films lavished with painstaking restoration and awesome sound. The catch? There are four volumes, priced at \$90 each. And, of course, they don't include the new blond Bond. But 007 devotees won't care.

POLITICAL JUNKIE

→ You've never really read the Constitution until you've gazed at the limited-edition version illustrated and signed by Sam Fink (\$500, Welcome Books). There are only 1,500 copies of this colorful document in existence, so it's sure to impress Hill rats for many administrations to come.

HIPPIE FREAK

→ The wacky CD/DVD packaging trend continues with "Perception" (\$150, Rhino). It's shaped like an entrance because it contains 12 discs of The Doors — remastered versions of each of their albums plus a DVD. We bet it'll light your aunt's fire. VICKY HALLETT AND SCOTT ROSENBERG (EXPRESS)

mixed media



Not such jolly rogers: A tome on pirates details high-seas misdeeds.

For Buffs of Stranger Stuff

If your loved one's hobby is knitting, finding a book to give as a gift is a non-issue. People who dress as pirates, not so much. Here, a few ideas for those with less mainstream pastimes.

WEAPON: A HISTORY OF ARMS AND ARMOR (\$40, DK) chronicles the weapons of every culture, starting with cave people (pointy rocks!), going through

A pop-up pirate book is an arrgh-fully good gift.

the Middle Ages (pointy metal things!) and into today (things that shoot pointy metal things!). Clear explanations help readers visualize all the stuff humans use to beat the crap out of one another.

PIRATE SOUL (\$30, Running Press) takes a child's love of pirates and combines it with a kid's lust for pop-up books. Adult buccaneers will love it, too. History is interspersed with envelopes to open, document replicas to pore over and a real cloth skull-and-bones flag.

Jason King's **THE CANNIBAL 3** (\$25, Ten Speed Press) is not your parents' coffee table book. Unless your parents grew up in the '60s. Marvel at the lush photographs of hundreds of varieties of chronic. And inscribe the number for Domino's on the flyleaf. FIONA ZUBLIN (EXPRESS)

Styles Fashion



Pick of the Glitter

Party looks to make you an evening star

Step away from the Santa hat, and please stash the snowman sweater. Holiday celebrations, from the office bash to a friend's Hanukkah feast, call for sophisticated style, not kitsch stolen from the Macy's parade. Lace, metallics and big jewelry make looking special especially easy this yuletide season. "You want to stand out," said Katherine Ordway of Capitol Hill boutique Maggie and Lola. "It's about wearing color or something with an attention-getting bow. No little black dresses!" These combos marry nice designs (flattering pants) with naughty touches (plunging necklines), which seems fashionably in tune with the spirit of the season.

JENNIFER BARGER (EXPRESS)

1

SEMIFORMAL FITTING

An elegant bash — a yuletide wedding, dinner at Restaurant Eve — merits a ladylike yet lush combo. An emerald velvet dress pairs with a mantilla-esque lace jacket, bow-print pumps and showstopper earrings.

EARRINGS Like a pair of tannenbaum trimmers, Erika Pena's Lucite sparklers light up your face. (\$42, girlshop.com)

JACKET A lace bolero adds flamenco flair to cocktail gowns; it can also go over jeans and a tee. (Betsy Johnson, Tysons Galleria, 703-442-3940)

DRESS What film femmes like Grace or Audrey might've worn to Bing's shindig: J.Crew's fir-hued frock. (\$148, jcrew.com)

SHOES Bow wow: the 1980s redux on leather pumps printed with jewel-tone bows. (\$195, Betsey Johnson)

2

POST-CUBICLE CHIC

An office soiree calls for flashing style, not sleek velvet pants and funky, chunky accessories. Convince the boss, not convince her you have a part-time

NECKLACE Lucite and crystal nuggets form a goes-with-anything choker. (\$163, tarinatarantino.com)

BRACELETS How can a monogram go mod? As a bangle wrapped in initialed paper. (\$38, anthroologie.com)

TOP stripe trim o (\$228) **PANTS** Theory's trousers get glam in velvet. (\$255, Barney's Co-Op, 5471 Wisconsin Ave.; 301-634-4069)



3

DINNER PARTY ANIMAL

Heading to a pal's for prime rib or paella? Jeans seem ordinary; a pretty skirt and cozy sequined top say "celebration" without looking like a Disney princess' getup.

A

swingy top,
should impress
at Hooters.

TOP Comfort meets chic on Phyl Couture's T-shirt knit with sequin trim. (\$115, unsungdesigners.com)

EARRINGS J. Lo hoops get Midas-ized. (\$40, South Moon Under, area stores)

BAG Like something you might inherit from a Parisian aunt, this pleated fabric purse boasts velvet flowers and a posh tassel. (\$115, Wild Women Wear Red, 1512 U St. NW; 202-387-5700)

BRACELET A cool cuff bears a carnelian oval. (\$88, South Moon Under)

SKIRT Calypso Christiane Celle, known for its beachy style, goes luxe with a slightly crinkled silk calf sweater. (\$240, Maggie and Lola, 1013 E St. SE; 202-234-2850)

BOOTS Banish memories of Ugg boots with Corso Como's gold-trimmed wedges. (\$280, Wild Women Wear Red)



4

PRINCESS LACE

Laura from "Project Runway," Behnaz Sarafpour and countless gals in Brussels know lace's bewitching powers. As a frock, it rocks for a night at the Ken Cen or New Year's Eve.

B

NECKLACE No crown jewels in your treasury? Eda & Betty's crystal teardrop necklace lends a royal flush to even a commoner's neck. (\$150, girlshop.com)

DRESS A plunging neckline, ribbon sash and lace overlay lend tres Francais charm to a gown from West Coast label Wyeth by Todd Magill. (\$425, Barney's Co-Op)

SHOES Ballet flats, here by Dolce Vita in silver leather, look dreamy with dresses. But they can appear on your fashion marquee with skinny jeans. (\$98, South Moon Under)



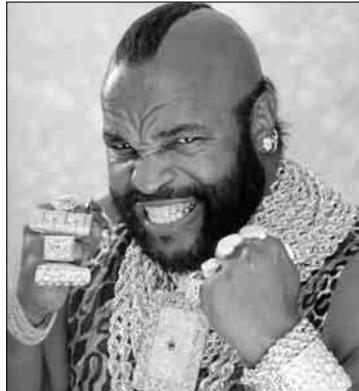
A
swingy top,
should impress
at Hooters.

Anna Sui merges
circles and cool dot
his silk chiffon baby.
anthropologie.com)

ALS Bronze glows
-queen platforms.
Setsey Johnson)

Styles | fashion

mixed media



Mr. T was an early pioneer of bling.

BOOKS

Shiny Happy People

■ There's something deliciously awesome about **BLING: THE HIP-HOP JEWELRY BOOK** by Reggie Osse and Gabriel Tolliver (\$20, Bloomsbury).

JEWELRY BOOK by Reggie Osse and Gabriel Tolliver (\$20, Bloomsbury). That it examines the sparkly accoutrements of everyone from Liberace to Biz Markie might be it. It might be page 79, which claims "our blingsters ... definitely love Jesus," showing heavy metal religious icons on the necks of Ja Rule, Kanye West and Ma\$e. Or it could be the profile of Eddie's Gold Teeth in Atlanta, complete with a photo that proves skinny white guys look ridiculous with tooth grills. KRISTEN PAGE-KIRBY (EXPRESS)

BOOKS

Copycat Cool

■ Stalking celebs is evil, but imitating how they dress is good. The premise behind **InStyle** magazine also courses through **INSTYLE INSTANT STYLE** (\$30). With glam shots of Jessica, Cameron, et al, the book details how you can flatter your Queen Latifah-ish butt or be a Jen Aniston clone in jeans and a blazer. But the clothes shown look a season out of date, so we question how in style it really is. JENNIFER BARGER (EXPRESS)

BOOKS

What Lies Beneath

Rebecca Apsan's **THE LINGERIE HANDBOOK** (\$14, Workman) teaches you everything you could possibly want to know about little silky naughty things. From fit to a glossary of different types of bras (Quick: What's the difference between a balconette and a demi-cup?) to explorations of the wonders of shape-wear, the book is certainly knowledgeable about what's up down below. K.P.K.



Racking up the hits: I'm-with-the-band cool clothes at 14th Street's Redeem.

(a Gothic church-worthy lamb) and indie-rock soundtrack, Redeem could be an East Village or West Hollywood lounge. But sweet, homey touches — distressed wood dressing room doors, flower-filled bud vases and a curvy, louche sofa — keep the joint from feeling too much like the Killers are about to play a set here.

SERVICE: Though these casual styles seem angled at grown-up cool kids, no one here will puff on a clove cigarette and roll their eyes if you come in wearing jeans bought at the mall. Laid-back sales associates seemed happy to ferry sizes to the dressing room or explain how to wear items like a tunic that seemed to have four armholes.

PRICE: Most items fall in the \$50 to \$300 range.

MINUS POINTS: Keeping with the underground vibe, Redeem has a smallish sign, making it a bit hard to spot.

BUREAUCRACY: Refunds for 30 days with receipt.

BOTTOM LINE: Finally, the clothes you need to join a band, or at least hang with one. You may never feel cool, but these styles mean you can look it.

A Hipster Messiah?

Redeem

1734 14TH ST. NW | 202-332-7447 | HOURS: MON. NOON-8 P.M., WED.-FRI. NOON-8 P.M., SAT. 10 A.M.-8 P.M., SUN. NOON-6 P.M.

With its rock 'n' roll jeans, Franz Ferdinand-slim jackets and logo tees, the latest fashion boutique on 14th Street looks a little like the closet of recent "Project Runway" winner Jeffrey Sebelia. An urban, edgy addition to the stylish retail zone that includes Muleh and Pop,

this guys-and-gals newbie moves to a decidedly different fashion beat with scarce left coast and Canadian brands like Bodybag by Jude and Barking Irons.

STYLE: Downtown hipsters and 9:30 Clubbers, say yeah! Washingtonian Lori Parkerson, craving little labels from big cities (Montreal, LA, NYC) created a trove of hard-to-find stuff.

Think elusive labels like Brit fave Religion and California menswear comer Endovanera.

Tattoo-style tees, Earnest Sewn skinny jeans and Bodybag's gray pinstripe bubble skirt with a crown decal would work in creative offices or at any concert venue except maybe the Kennedy Center.

With its exposed brick walls, are-we-on-Melrose Ave.? murals

Mystery Shopper

GARB AROUND THE GLOBE ►► IN EUROPE WITH OUR FORMER INTERN

Netherlands Hot

■ Thinking outside of the box is said to have great results, such as creativity, uniqueness, the ensuing admiration, etc. But how does one escape the "box" of the Daily Dress Doldrums? Many young Europeans seem to have a knack for regularly dressing in a way that defies the expected and rebels against convention.

Marinella is a student in Maastricht — a city in the southern tip of the Netherlands, sandwiched between Belgium and Germany — and from the looks of her innovative outfit, she is very much de-boxed. For her morning trip to the market, she rocks a loose-fitting, blue linen shirt, cinched at the empire waist with a vintage white leather belt (not

pictured here), over a pair of black leggings. Her black-and-brown knit scarf pulls the look together, and she polishes the outfit with a pair of black wedge boots (not pictured).

Marinella has successfully bent three maxims of dress:

■ Cold weather equals dressing like you're wrapped in a down comforter. Marinella's layers and thicker leggings (instead of tights) keeps her warm sans the marshmallow jacket.

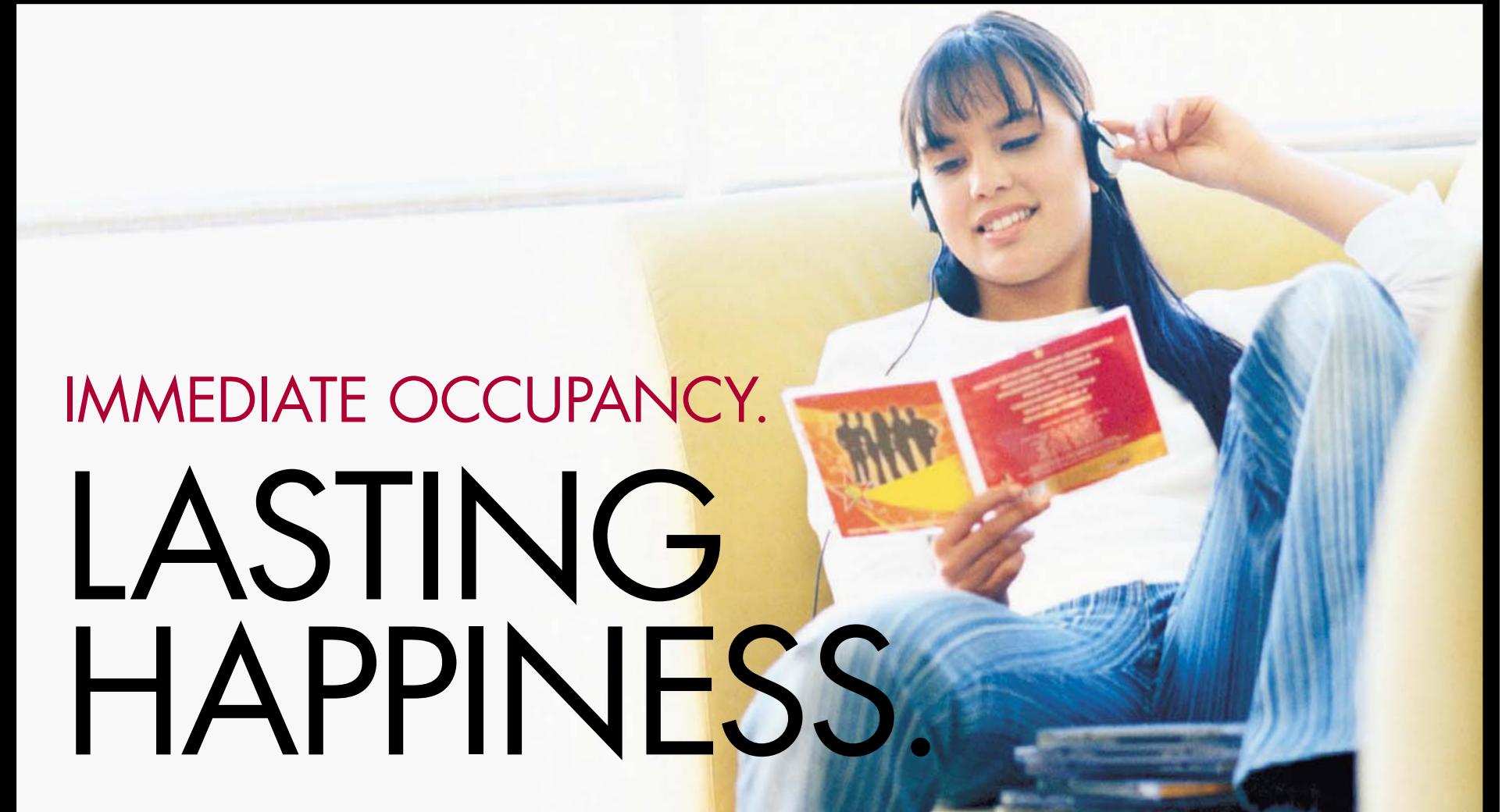
■ Brown, black and blue equals no. This outfit combines the three colors very successfully because these specific hues are varied enough in tone that



they don't muddle together. Remember that the Land of Color No-Nos is full of exceptions.

■ Shirts equals shirts. Marinella demonstrates that constricting the use of an article of clothing to its traditional form is very silly. Remember that irony is your friend. A shirt is not a dress, but you can wear it as a dress. A "Mister Rogers"-esque sweater can be a funky, young find. Time to raid Grandpa's wardrobe!

→ To recapture the look, check out [urbanoutfitters.com](#) and snag the Free People Drop Waist Boy Shirt (\$78), the Damsel Slip Cropped Leggings (\$24) and the Lux Crinkle Ribbed Cardigan (\$38). Also, try slipping your feet into Mossimo's Glory Mid-Shaft Low-Wedge Boots (\$30) at [target.com](#). MAYA SILVER



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Styles | entertaining



the protein in, say, a lentil soup.

Fixins: At Atwater's, each soup has its own individual garnish; so should it be at a soup party. Rice, pasta, fresh herbs and cheese are common ones. Thomas and his wife slathered goat cheese onto thin baguette slices and baked them into cheesy croutons.

Timing: This hostess was still cooking when her first guests arrived, but it doesn't have to be that way. Soups can be easily made in advance, leaving critical moments free for preparing garnishes.

Serving: Watch out for spoon contamination! With so many pots on the stove, I mixed up my stirring implements, giving the white clam chowder the orange hue of the butternut squash. (A friend called it "Connecticut Clam Chowder" — a cross between New England white and Manhattan red.) It tasted fine, but had there been vegetarians present, I would have felt awful contaminating the veggie soup.

Label: As each new guest arrived, I had to explain what was in each pot so they could ferret out any food restrictions before the first bite. Since this afternoon party was a small affair, it was actually a fun way to introduce everyone to the festivities, but for larger parties, small signs next to each pot would help.

Bowls: I was just barely able to outfit my 16 guests with bowls. (If you come up short on spoons, though, just tell guests not to be shy about slurping.) If you're expecting more guests than your china pattern allows, tell everyone that the BYOB at this soiree stands for bring your own bowl. JULIA BEIZER

Eat Soup, Glorious Soup

Grab a spoon, bring your own bowl and drink in this soiree

I can't ski. I've never liked being cold. When I was a kid, my favorite part of sledding was going home. To say winter is my least favorite season is an understatement.

But even I can find a few redeeming qualities in this barren time of year. At the top of that

short list is soup. One night, over a few steaming bowls of yellow pepper stew, my friend Amy and I came up with a plan for a soup party. Here's what we learned about serving the ultimate liquid lunch:

Menu: The right selection is the heart of any soup shindig, said Ben Thomas, a Brooklynite whose dad's been throwing them for eight years. Last month, Thomas and his wife gave the tradition a try in their own home.

"It's pretty essential to have a brothy one, a hearty one — for people who don't think soup is a meal — one with meat or chicken and a vegetarian one." Though perhaps not as interesting as the African peanut soup his family makes, chili is a reliable crowd favorite, he said.

With two pots cooked up by my soup-savvy friends, we offered a total of five choices: white corn tortilla soup, New England clam chowder, tomato bisque, butter-

squash and leek, and Filipino chicken and rice.

Carbs: Behind every good soup is a loaf of crusty bread. Like wine and cheese, different breads complement different soups, said Ned Atwater, owner of Atwater's soup shops in the Baltimore region. Tomato-based soups, for example, can be on the sour side, so serve "yeasted bread like a ciabatta or a country white," instead of sourdough, he said. "Whole-grain bread is great with vegetarian soups — and not only in taste," he added. A whole-grain bread can complete

Steal
My
Party

bash in a flash

Washing Me, Washing You

At the beginning of December, you can unleash your inner St. Nick and clean out your savings account, or you can unleash your inner Howard Hughes and clean off your germ-infested hands. The first week of December is National Hand Washing Awareness Week, a time to remember that a hot and soapy scrub is the best protec-



tion against colds and the flu, though keeping your fingers out of your nose doesn't hurt either.

The best way to celebrate hand washing is to give people a reason to do it, so plan your party menu around messy finger foods like bar-

beque. Willard's Real Pit Barbecue in Chantilly can cater your affair with its hot Carolina-style ribs (\$20 per rack, 703-480-9970), ensuring that all your guests have to wash multiple times.

Try offering a menu of unique soap options to encourage cleansing. Lush's Champagne Snow Shower Jelly (\$5.75, usa.lush.com) puts a little wiggle in your wash. Or make sure your guests aren't doing the wet-and-shake with Squid Soap, which marks hands with "ink" that won't go away until 20 seconds of washing have elapsed (\$16 for four, squidsoap.com).

Download decorations at the official Hand Washing Awareness Week Web site (henrythehand.com). There's even an MP3 file to which you can get down and dirty. JAMIE PAGE DEATON

drink special

Voodoo Lady

- 8 oz. milk (whole or soy)
- 2 oz. chai concentrate
- 1 oz. Myers dark rum
- 1/2 oz. Kahlua

Warm a mug. Heat the milk on medium-low to 165 degrees. Stir in chai concentrate (they use Pacific Vanilla powder) and remove from heat. Add rum and Kahlua. Top with chai and serve with animal crackers.

BY DAVID FRITZLER, COFFEE AND BEVERAGE OPERATIONS MANAGER FOR TRYST, OPEN CITY AND THE DINER



entertaining | Styles



Latkes taste just as festive when you cook them before a party and then reheat.

Simple Holiday Menus

I am hosting an event in mid-December that I am billing as a "holiday" party. My co-host just got back from Jordan, where she fell in love with the pistachio, phyllo and honey pastries they make there. I would like to get a tray for the party, but don't know where to buy them.

For the pastries, I'd try Mediterranean Bakery in Alexandria, not far from Landmark Mall — not a real stretch if you live in Vienna. It's not just a bakery but a food store with a wide range of products, most (but not all) Middle Eastern.

I'm hosting a Hanukkah gathering this year. Given that the traditional way of frying and eating latkes immediately would keep me in the kitchen all evening, is it possible to cook latkes ahead and keep warm in the oven so that they still taste good and fresh? And any suggestions for app veggies that fit in?

You can cook ahead and reheat. Don't let them get too brown when you cook them. Reheat at 350 F until warm, then blot off any excess oil with paper towels before serving. You can even freeze if you need to.

As for extras/app veggies, I don't

**Free Range
On Food**



The staff of the Washington Post Food section goes Free Range on Food every Wednesday at 1 p.m. at washingtonpost.com/liveonline. Catch up on recipes, cooking trends and more.

I think this is the time to worry about a square meal. How about sticking with traditional favorites, fish salads, chopped liver and the like — presented as canapes to look more contemporary? Whitefish on pumpernickel rounds, chopped liver on challah squares. You get the idea.

I would like to entertain using some prepared food. I just don't know where to start. What is a good combination of foods without getting too pricey?

If I wanted to go to Whole Foods, I might call ahead and have them make a lasagne sized just for a crowd. Next I'd go to the salad bar and load up there. For simple hors d'oeuvres, buy marcona almonds; pick up some prosciutto or serrano ham and thin Italian breadsticks and wrap the ham around the sticks, leaving some plain for the kids; and then to the olive bar. For dessert, I'd get bar cookies. On your way out, pick up some cut up fruit.

For a wholesale club: I'd go right to the freezer and pick a nice ravioli and sauce that I could cook myself. Into the refrigerator there for baby greens, etc. — that's my salad. For hors d'oeuvres — raid the freezer again. Dessert would be fresh fruit and whatever they're featuring that I've gotten to taste. Their seasonal stuff can be surprisingly good, but you'll want to make sure.

? The staff of the Washington Post Food section goes Free Range on Food every Wednesday at 1 p.m. at washingtonpost.com/liveonline. Catch up on recipes, cooking trends and more.

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Holiday Planner

December 1 through December 7, 2006

December 1

Kiehl's Shop to Stop AIDS
5:00 to 7:00 p.m.
3110 M Street, NW

Shop at Kiehl's to stop youth AIDS on December 1, World AIDS Day. 100% of all proceeds will be donated directly to the YouthAIDS charity. (202) 333-5101

December 1

Parish Gallery
Werner Kohn's Opening Reception
6:00 to 8:00 p.m.
1054 31st Street, NW

Don't miss the opening reception for photographer Werner Kohn. The exhibit will feature 100 photographs on Jazz musicians from 1959 to present. (202) 944-2310

December 1 & 2

Hitched
Kenneth Pool Trunk Show
By Appointment Only
1523 Wisconsin Avenue, NW

Join Hitched for their Kenneth Pool Trunk Show where designer Austin Scarlet, of Project Runway fame, will showcase his new bridal collection. (202) 333-6162

December 1 & 2

Tudor Place
Wreathmaking Workshop
**December 1: 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.
or 2:00 to 3:30 p.m.,**
December 2: 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.
1644 31st Street, NW

Bring your own creative edge and fashion a holiday wreath with greens from the Tudor Place garden. \$28 for members, \$35 for non-members. (202) 965-0400

Every Saturday and Sunday Throughout December

The Ritz-Carlton Holiday Tea
1:00 to 2:30 p.m.
3100 South Street, NW

Spend the afternoon in the lobby lounge during the month of December. Children will enjoy holiday tales and treats while adults can relax with a traditional selection of gourmet teas and pastries. (202) 912-4100

December 4 & 11

Proper Topper
Stocking Stuffers' Delight
10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
3213 P Street, NW

Take advantage of Stocking Stuffers' Delight, featuring a gift-with-purchase and free gift basket for every \$100 spent. (202) 333-6200

December 5

Wink's 30% Off Sale
3109 M Street, NW

Don't miss your chance to get amazing holiday deals at one of Georgetown's favorite boutiques. One day only! Shoppers must present Holiday Planner for discount. (202) 338-9465

December 5

Design Within Reach
2006 Beaujolais Nouveau Tasting & Book Signing
7:00 p.m.
3307 Cady's Alley, NW

Authors of "Drinkology EATS: A Guide to Bar Food and Cocktail Party Fare," James Waller and Ramona Ponce, a Manhattan-based food stylist, will lead a tasting of the just-released 2006 Beaujolais Nouveau. They will offer advice on planning a holiday-time wine or cocktail party, and sign copies of their new book. (202) 339-9480

December 6

Bluemercury
Holiday Shopping Night
4:00 to 10:00 p.m.
3059 M Street, NW

Experts from their exceptional collections of beauty products and bath items will be on hand to help you select the perfect gift. Enjoy 10% off purchases over \$100, 15% off purchases over \$175, and 20% off purchases over \$250. (202) 965-1300

December 6

Bank of Georgetown
Peppermint Sticks & Hot Cocoa
10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
1001 Wisconsin Avenue, NW

Stop by the Bank of Georgetown, on the corner of Wisconsin Avenue and K Street, for hot cocoa and the chance to win a fabulous holiday gift basket. (202) 965-1717

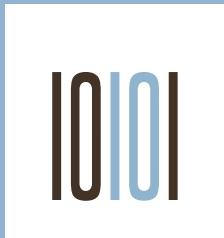
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SEEKING ANSWERS
ON THE TOWN

Q When does the holiday season truly begin?

THE FRONT PAGE | DUPONT CIRCLE | NOV. 27

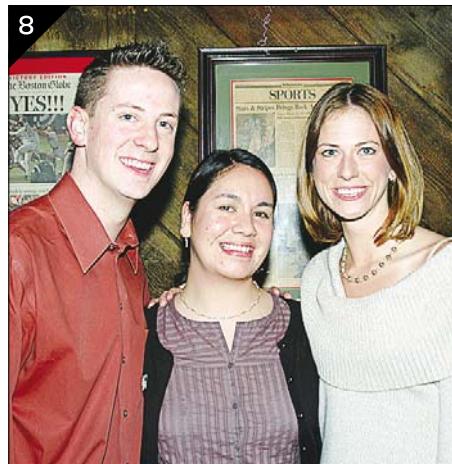
1. "When I saw the ChristmasLights.com van parked out front," Alissa Levine. "When Starbucks puts out their cups with the snowflakes," Matt Crossley. **2.** "You start realizing you're in debt," Katie Douglas. **3.** "Egg nog is on sale at the liquor store," Christina Fischer, right, with Rachel Nagle. **4.** "When they start playing crazy commercials," Katie Dieter, left, with Katie Hollencamp. **5.** "Christmas Muzak in the bathrooms," Rachel Summers, right, with Sam Burch. **6.** "Your mother wakes you up at 5 a.m. the day after Thanksgiving," Jason Jackson. "When you buy too much for yourself and not enough for others," Candice Clawson. **7.** "When I start going to parties left and right," Dayana Rassias. "When the bars get busy," Elias Castaneda. **8.** "When your credit card debt reaches five figures," John Nullmeyer. "When the in-laws ask what your S.O. wants for Christmas," Rhonda Kauffman, center. "When everyone in the family starts staring at your ring finger," Susan Nullmeyer. **9.** "You hear the Charlie Brown theme song at restaurants," Scott Nyitay. "Starbucks," Megan Coluccio. **10.** "When Bill O'Reilly starts the war on Christmas," Mike Harmon. "Definitely Starbucks," Erin Gregory. **11.** "When people start trampling each other in the parking lot," Mike Dyer. MINA PAHLEVAN



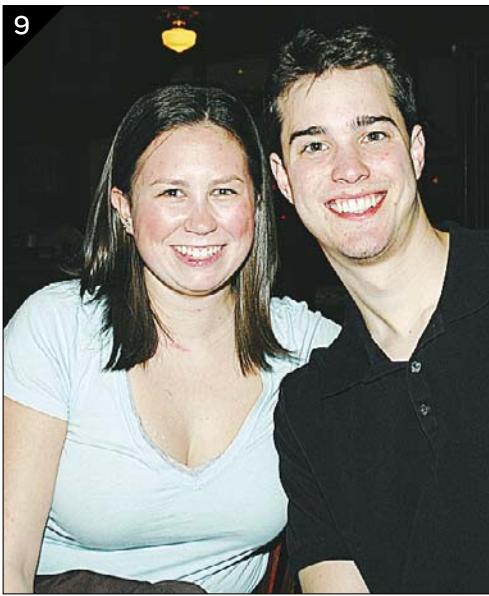
↑ "When Starbucks puts out their cups with the snowflakes."



← "Your mom wakes you at 5 a.m. the day after Thanksgiving."



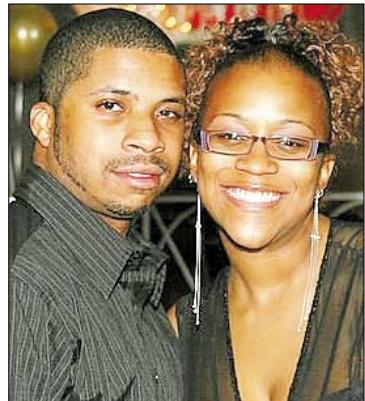
↑ "When everyone in the family starts staring at your ring finger."



↑ "When Bill O'Reilly starts the war on Christmas."

B.I.O.

* BY INVITATION ONLY: UPCOMING WEDDINGS & UNIONS



Colin Dew, Lauren Grady

Colin, 26, is a program analyst for the D.C. attorney general's office, Child Support Division. Lauren, 23, is an executive assistant for BATTELLE Office of Homeland Security. They live in Temple Hills.

■ **The Main Event:** A black-tie ceremony for 400 people, followed by a smaller reception for family and close friends on Aug. 4 in Washington.

■ **How They Met:** Lauren worked at the Ritz Camera on L Street; Colin worked four doors down at Starbucks. One day, she ordered a white-chocolate mocha.

"The next five people after me ordered the same thing!" said Lauren. "When Colin handed me my drink, he said, 'See what you started?'"

■ **First Impressions:** "When I first heard her voice, I was caught," said Colin. "I thought she had a very distinctive voice and it gave me chills."

■ **First Date:** Dinner at Maggiano's.

■ **How He Proposed:** At the Eleanor Roosevelt statue at the FDR Memorial. "As an added romantic touch, he walked me over to a fountain, and we both bent down," said Lauren. "He grabbed my hand, dipped our hands in the water and named that our fountain."

■ **Dress:** A customized Winnie Couture gown adorned with Swarovski crystals.

■ **Wedding Jitters:** "I don't fear anything my God has a hand in, so nothing," said Colin.

"We both couldn't see life without each other," said Colin.

Shore to Be Love

Ah, work: giver of money, provider of high-speed Internet, and place where that lost number of the guy you met can fall right into your lap. Such is the case with **SARA EASTER** and **KEVIN KIRNER**, at least.

The pair met at a bar on the Jersey Shore and "we were supposed to meet up the next day, but I lost his phone number," said Sara. "A few weeks later, while talking to a co-worker, I figured out that she actually had transferred from the hotel where he worked." Sara got Kevin's e-mail address, and they pursued a long-distance relationship until Kevin moved to the area a year later. "We went back to the Jersey shore this past Memorial Day weekend, three years to the weekend we met there," said Kevin. "I proposed on the beach at sunset."

Sara, 26, is a pharmaceutical sales representative with Wyeth Pharmaceuticals. Kevin, 27, is an accountant with Kimpton Hotels. They live in Bethesda and will marry June 16 in Hamilton, N.J.



Alaina Epperson, Jason Shonkwiler

Alaina, 23, is a budget analyst with the Corporation for National and Community Service. Jason, 26, is a sergeant in the U.S. Army. They live in Oakton.

■ **The Main Event:** The formal Methodist ceremony was held Nov. 25 in Noblesville, Ind., followed by a reception for 225 guests.

■ **How They Met:** In elementary school. "He was the hot older brother of my friend," said Alaina. Later, when Jason joined the Army, he visited Alaina's mom's third-grade class. Mom gave him Alaina's number.

■ **How He Proposed:** "Jason wanted to go into the city to see the monuments at sunset," said Alaina. She wanted to change clothes, but he didn't let her—so when he popped the question at the World War II Memorial, she was sporting an "I Heart Nerds" T-shirt.

■ **Their Song:** "Little Moments" by Brad Paisley. "The first line is 'I'll never forget the first time that I heard that pretty mouth say that dirty word.' I thought she was prim and proper and she swore and it surprised me," said Jason.

■ **Most Hated Clothing Item:** "All of her clothes are cute," said Jason. "I just wish there weren't so many."

■ **Making it Unique:** "Since Jason just got back from Iraq, I think we're all looking at this as a celebration of his return and a pseudo-family reunion."



Getting Married? If you'd like to see your wedding or commitment ceremony in B.I.O., send your favorite informal photograph (wacky is fine, but please don't send a formal engagement shot), plus your names, contact information and the ceremony date to weddings@readexpress.com. We'll contact you with some questions as your big day approaches.

WEDDINGS WANTED

Here's our holiday gift to you: Due to the fall/winter wedding slowdown, you won't have to wait weeks or months to be featured if you submit now. Don't worry if your nuptials are months away — that's not a problem. Just send an e-mail to weddings@readexpress.com to get the ball rolling.

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Last Week's Solution

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6	3	1	9	2	7	5	8	4
8	7	2	5	4	1	6	3	9
9	5	4	8	6	3	2	7	1

How to Play

The rules of Samurai Sudoku are the same as in the popular Sudoku puzzles that appear in Express and The Washington Post.

As with standard Sudoku, the Samurai version requires no math, just logic, reasoning ... and an iron will. The goal is to fill in each column, row and 3x3 box with the digits 1 through 9 without repeating any. The twist in Samurai Sudoku is that the digits that appear in the overlapping boxes must work for both puzzles.

A piece of advice to get you started: Don't focus on completing one grid at a time. Keep the whole puzzle in mind as you go, because filling in a number in one grid could give you clues to another. As always, there's only one solution, which will appear in next week's edition of Weekend Styles.

 Can't get enough Sudoku? Find a standard Sudoku puzzle in the Comics section of the Post every Sunday and in the Style section every Monday through Saturday.

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Brandywine Sat & Sun 12-4 \$559,000
5BR, 3.5BA on 1.1 acres, oversized 2 car garage, FP, deck. 6204 Kayla Court.
Kellie Smith www.3014409151.com
Andrews Office 301.423.9200



Silver Spring Open Sun 1-4 \$279,900
Move-in condition. Low condo fee includes water/sewer & loads of comm. amenities. 14101 Valleyfield Dr, Apt 7.
Eunice Phillips 301.455.8167
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Alexandria Open Sat 1-4 \$300,000
Price & Location! Stunning 2BR, 2BA end unit Condo w/1300 sf. Close to 395 & Metro! New W/D, crpt, paint, redone BAs & more. 200 N. Pickett St, #304. Hallmark Bldg.
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www.ChristineO.com



Alexandria Open Sun 12-4 \$534,000
ENTERTAINER'S DELIGHT! Extensive wrap-around deck! Renovated raised Rambler w/4 BR, 2 FBA, fin lower lvl. New floors & appls. Huge yard w/flowerbeds, patio, brick walks. Up to 10K in closing assistance. 4811 Poplar St.
Charles Perry 703.798.4866



Arlington Open Sun 1-4 \$475,000
Have it all...location, space & privacy. Pristine 3 lvl TH @ Shirlington. 2 BR, 2 1/2 BA, hdwds, FP, fin basement & patio. Valerie Wilkinson 703.585.9271



Gainesville Open Sun 12-4 \$459,950
Single lvl living + rm for expansion! Spacious well maintained w/separate LR, DR, FR w/FP & kit w/breakfast area. 1900 sf of unfin bsmnt w/FBA rough-in! 13600 Smallpath Court.
Madonna 703.919.9233



Great Falls Open Sun 1-4 \$949,900
Total renovation on 2/3 acre. Cherry cabs, granite, Brazilian wide plank hdwd, ceramic tile. LL wired for home theatre. From Tysons: Rte 7 West, L on Riva Ridge Dr to 1114 on L.
Pat Evers 703.851.8631
www.patevers.com



Haymarket Open Sun 12-4 \$459,900
Nearly 1 acre! Mature trees, natural landscaping, deck, gazebo, small barn, double driveway! Fully renovated 2-lvl, 3 BR, 2 BA Rambler. New hdwds, Berber, ceramic tile. Up to 10K in closing assist. 3823 Mountain Rd.
Lynette Smith 571.264.6016



Lorton Open Sun 1-4 \$674,900
Traditional Colonial w/open flr plan. New paint, hdwds, granite counters. 4 BR, 3.5 BA. 9011 Harrover Place.
Farnese 703.981.1099



Reston Open Sat 1-4 \$179,900
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Vienna Open Sun 1-5 \$450,000
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Alexandria \$305,000
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Alexandria \$639,000
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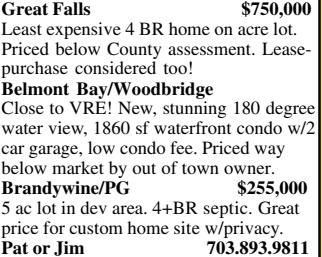
Arlington/Rosslyn \$349,000
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Nancy Kane 703.966.3381



Falls Church/McLean \$449,500
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Great Falls \$750,000
Least expensive 4 BR home on acre lot. Priced below County assessment. Lease-purchase considered too!
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